

GLOBALIZING TEACHER LABOR FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY:
THE CASE OF NEW YORK CITY'S CARIBBEAN TEACHERS

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy Studies
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014

Urbana, Illinois

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Abstract

This is an interpretive and ethnographic exploration of actual neoliberalism as lived by a group of immigrant international knowledge workers and their children, specifically participants in a 2001 New York City public schools recruitment of teachers from Anglophone Caribbean nations. Their testimonies shed light on at least three aspects of the human costs and benefits of globalizing teacher labor for the knowledge economy: the nexus between workers' rights, citizenship rights, and human rights—and the importance of the nation in advancing these rights; the value of their insider/outsider perspectives on American public education; and the gendered construction of their transnational, transgenerational class projects. I argue that international teacher recruitment, and in particular the U.S. public school recruitment of highly trained teachers from “developing” countries, has become an illusory panacea for alleged teacher shortages, a short-term strategy for staffing classrooms instead of a longer-term and much more difficult and costly set of strategies for really prioritizing education as a necessary core value of a just and sustainable knowledge economy. Focusing on the case of New York City's Caribbean teachers and privileging their testimony about their responses to such recruitment elucidates many of the personal contours of this emerging strategy of the neoliberalized global governance of teacher labor. This project contributes new knowledge by attending to this understudied population of teachers, revealing the extraordinary flexibility demanded of their globalized labor, citizenship, and humanity; important insights into how American public education could be improved; and key gendered aspects of their experiences. Their lived experiences show ways in which their access to certain workers' rights precipitated their access to citizenship rights which then precipitated their access to their full complement of human rights. This enriches the discussion on immigration rights, strengthening as it does the understanding of the relationships

and interdependencies between these different kinds of rights. Their insider/outsider perspectives on the New York City public schools where they taught deserve special consideration, and can help to clarify what actions must be taken to improve these and other American public schools. Finally, their testimonies also reveal some established constructions of Caribbean gendered identities, in particular the matrifocality of these immigrant families, an organizing principal they have maintained across time and borders. This study is based on intensive interviews with 10 of New York City's public school teachers recruited from Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2001; and five of their adult children. My ethnographic research protocol was modeled on the Leon Dash method of immersion interviewing, especially in two ways: First, I patterned some of the basic introductory interview questions on similar questions developed by Dash over many years, and followed his precepts of tape recording then transcribing the interviews. Second, I spent considerable time socializing informally with as many of the participants as possible, in their homes and churches, at their parties, on subways and beaches, and at festivals and parades, in Brooklyn, New York, and in Port of Spain, Trinidad, and Tobago. I interviewed these participants from March, 2013 through August, 2013, in Brooklyn, New York and in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. I hoped to learn what motivated these teachers to make this move, how they and their families were coping with some of the special challenges of it, why they in particular may have been chosen over other similarly qualified applicants, and how their particular experiences speak to the wider experiences of flexible knowledge workers operating in a globalized arena. This intensive interviewing method proved particularly effective in generating this new ethnographic knowledge of an as yet understudied group of international and American public school teachers.

This is for my children, Isabelle and Arthur; and for all the children of wandering mothers

Acknowledgements

Thank you first to Frédéric Beaugeard, my husband, who always believes in me, and who listens to me a lot. So many people helped me, I cannot list them all here, but I am so grateful. Here are a few.

Thank you to my many amazing professors, especially my dissertation committee, for inspiring me and for guiding me with your own fine research and teaching. Thank you to my advisor, Pradeep Dhillon, for the opportunities she gave me to see myself as a scholar, and for her devotion to Immanuel Kant and her comcomittant appreciation for the infinite worth of every immortal soul. Thank you to my committee member Cameron McCarthy for his practical guidance on interpretive methodology, and for modeling multitasking in scholarship. Thank you to my committee member Teresa Barnes for her inspirational work on African women's labor history, and for constantly challenging me to think harder. Thank you to my committee member Leon Dash, for teaching me his immersion interviewing method, and for inspiring me with his work on the American underclass. Thank you also to Leon Dash for allocating thousands of dollars of his own research budget from the Center for Advanced Study so that I could pay for my research trips to New York City, and for part of my trip to Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you to the Gender and Women's Studies Program for granting me the Due and Ferber International Dissertation Research Award for 2013-2014, which helped me to visit Trinidad and Tobago and meet with recruited teachers there. Thank you to the late Marianne Ferber, who co-funded this award and who passed away shortly after I received it; and thanks also to Jean Due, the other co-funder of this award. Thank you to the College of Liberal Arts, especially Timothy Wedig, for giving me the opportunity to teach Global Studies for the last 2 years of my doctoral studies. Thank you to all the professors I worked with and studied with in the College of Education,

including Cris Mayo, and the professors named above and below, for giving me the opportunity to teach Global Studies in Education, and also to perform various administrative duties during my first 3 years of doctoral work. Thank you to Fazal Rizvi for recruiting me into the Global Studies in Education program, and for introducing me to the globalization of educational policy. Thank you to Michael Peters for the seminar on Michel Foucault, and for showing me what a scholar does. Thank you to Bob Stake, Nicholas Burbules, Jennifer Greene and Gilberto Rosas for teaching great classes. Thank you to Gale Summerfield for teaching me how to gender my analysis of anything, and why I should always do that. Thanks to Karen Flynn for recommending key Caribbean theorists. Thank you to Nicole Lamers for showing me some of the career possibilities of a PhD in Global Studies in Education. Thanks to Noah Sobe and Shabnam Koirala-Azad for their advice during my New Scholars Dissertation workshop at the Comparative and International Education Society's 2013 annual conference in New Orleans.

Thank you to Rhoda Rae Gutierrez, for inspiring me with her excellent master's thesis on Filipino teachers in America. Thank you to Alyssa Hadley Dunn, for sharing with me her research on international teachers, and for calling my attention to The Black Institute. Thank you to Bertha Lewis, president and founder of The Black Institute, for encouraging me and introducing me to Caribbean teachers and their adult children affiliated with the Association of International Educators and The International Youth Association. Thank you to the Nesbitt Family for welcoming me into their Brooklyn home; and thank you to Antoinette Nesbitt and her many friends—especially Queens Jenny, Evette “June” Wright-Thomas, Orrin, Carol, Sandra and Hamline, and Tarkis and Ming Lee—for showing me around Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you to Auntie Claire for the cow's heel soup. Thank you to Rosaline O'Neal, president of the African American Caribbean Education Association, for several introductions. Thank you to

Eartha Hackett, for inspiring me with her own dissertation work, and for introducing me to several participants. Thank you to Mildred Lowe, Nellie Miller, Dorritt Crawford, Anton Nesbitt, Anthea Nesbitt, Alden Sandra Bethel, Kimlyn Prescod, Wray MacBurnie, Bertram Lewis, Monifa Crawford, Nesbitt, Mikel Crichlow, Sonya Williams and so many other Caribbean teachers and other Caribbean immigrants who discussed this project with me. Thank you to the Crawford Family, for making me feel at home in their home in Brooklyn; and thank you to Pastor Farell Jones, for praying over my migraine headache.

Thank you to all my friends for all the kind encouragement and good companionship. Thanks especially to Sujung Kim and Dinah Armstead, my dissertation writing support friends and New Orleans C.I.E.S. conference co-conspirators. Thank you to Wendi Shen, my Friday dissertation writing companion, and thanks to her mother for the dumplings. Thanks to Peter Kleinhans, my supportive old friend. Thanks to my old Urbana High School teacher friends, Mark Freedman and Phyllis Gingold. Thanks to my wonderful mother-in-law, Odile Leturdu. Thanks to my brothers, Tom Fitzpatrick and Joe Fitzpatrick, for always welcoming us home to the South Side of Chicago. Thanks to my old friend Gabriella Walker, for role modeling how to sit down in front of a computer for more or less one whole year and write a dissertation. Thanks to my doctoral colleagues and friends Anne Songi Lutomia, Lucinda Morgan, and Maria Cynthia Anderson, and thanks to my dear neighbor Rose Panjaithan. Last but not least, thanks to Ginger the Cat.

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Chapter One

Introduction:

New York City's Recruitment of Anglophone Caribbean Teachers

Seeking to shed light on the experiences of some of New York City's public school teachers recruited from selected Anglophone countries in 2001 and 2003, I interviewed several of these teachers as well as some members of their families from March, 2013 through August, 2013, in Brooklyn, New York and in Port of Spain, Trinidad, and Tobago. I hoped to learn what motivated these teachers to make this move, how they and their families were coping with some of the special challenges of it, why they in particular may have been chosen over other similarly qualified applicants, and how their particular experiences speak to the wider experiences of flexible knowledge workers operating in a globalized arena. At least three key themes emerge from this ethnographic approach: First, global knowledge workers such as these require better support when they immigrate to teach in America. Second, their special insider/outsider perspectives can help redress systemic problems with American public education. Third, gendered dynamics evident in this research can better inform policy makers concerned with international recruitment and immigration justice.

My ethnographic research protocol was modeled on the Leon Dash method of immersion interviewing, especially in two ways: First, I patterned some of the basic introductory interview questions on similar questions developed by Dash over many years. Second, I spent considerable time socializing informally with as many of the participants as possible, in their homes and churches, at their parties, on subways and beaches, and at festivals and parades, in Brooklyn, New York, and in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. I sought initial introductions to a few of these teachers and their adult children through formal organizations including The Black Institute (TBI), which is a black activist think tank headquartered in Manhattan, New York, and the

Association of International Educators (AIE), which is loosely affiliated with The Black Institute and organized for the purpose of helping recruited Caribbean teachers apply for and get their United States' permanent residency status documents, also known as “green cards.” These affiliated organizations introduced me to two Trinidadian families who participated in my study, and they also called my attention to The International Youth Association (TIYA), a group working to advance the immigration rights of the now adult children of the recruited Caribbean teachers. People I met through TBI, AIE, and TIYA also introduced me to two Guyanese families and a St. Vincent family who participated in the study. Another avenue for introductions which proved fruitful was the African American Caribbean Education Association, through which I met many Jamaican scholars and teachers, including one of the families and other participants.

Background

In the summers of 2001 and 2003, representatives from New York City's public schools sent a team of recruiters on a mission to hire some of the best, most experienced teachers from Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and other predominantly Anglophone Caribbean nations to come and teach in some of the city's poorest, hardest to staff schools. Abetted by experienced New York teachers who had themselves emigrated from the Caribbean many years earlier, these recruiters appear to have understood how to identify the region's most highly prized teachers, and what to say to persuade them to undertake jobs widely recognized as so tough that few or no qualified Americans were willing to do them. Motivated by recruitment promises of ample salaries and benefits, and visa, housing, and other transitional assistance for them and their families, and in many cases hoping in particular for better educational and career possibilities for

their children, hundreds of the most prestigious teachers in the Caribbean pulled up stakes, quitting their well-established careers, selling their homes, and leaving behind their homelands and everything and almost everyone they knew, to embark on a voyage to America, a place many thought of as the land of opportunity and the world beacon of human rights. Now more than a decade into this experiment in globalizing teacher labor, with records of satisfactory and even excellent service in the difficult jobs they were recruited to do, hundreds of these teachers report that much of the promised and expected material support has never materialized. Many are still without permanent residency status and, of even more pressing concern, many of them find that their adult children are no longer eligible to remain in the United States legally (American Federation of Teachers, 2009; The Black Institute, 2010; Degazon-Johnson, 2011; Mathews, 2009; Sack, 2001; Silvera, 2011).

The case of New York City's Caribbean teachers is only one of many international teacher recruitment campaigns undertaken by various state actors since the beginning of the 21st century, all of which evidently sought to alleviate particular local manifestations of what appears to be a burgeoning global teacher shortage (American Federation of Teachers, 2009; North, 2011). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) declared by the United Nations in 2002 aspire to end poverty around the globe by 2015 (Chatterji, 2011), and there is widespread agreement that they are unlikely to be met on time or perhaps ever without a massive increase in the world supply of qualified teachers (Chatterji, 2011). The two MDGs most directly influencing education in general and women's and girls' educational well-being in particular are the second and third: "2. Achieve universal primary education" and "3. Promote gender equality and empower women." According to the United Nations Development Programme, neither of these goals is on track to be met by 2015. Girls still lag behind boys in school enrollments,

especially at the tertiary level, and women still lag behind men in paid employment and political and other kinds of leadership roles (United Nations Development Program, 2012).¹ The shortage of qualified teachers, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, has been identified as a key deficiency that must be addressed before the second and third MDGs can be met, with double the current number needed (United Nations Development Program, 2012). Both rich and poor countries are facing teacher shortages in key areas from the primary level upwards, but while some countries need to actively expand their teaching force, others do not (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009). While dozens of sub-Saharan, South Asian, and other countries evidently go begging for qualified teachers, many qualified teachers in the United States and Europe face massive layoffs, and newly minted teacher graduates face long-term unemployment or underemployment in substitute or other kinds of provisional knowledge work that may never ripen into the full time professional careers for which they trained (Anderson, 2010; Giroux, 2010). The UNESCO Institute for Statistics divides countries into those that need more teachers and those that do not (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009); and attention to the flows of teaching labor between these regions elucidates essential contours of the global governmentality of education, as the global teaching force is organized in the service of both humanitarian and neoliberal objectives. In addition, Giroux (2010) has argued that massive teacher layoffs must be understood as part of the wider “crisis of neoliberalism—of casino capitalism and its ongoing assault on public goods, the social contract, and any remaining social protections offered by the social state” (p. 340). Particular attention to the ways teachers themselves, especially those affected by international recruitment, are making sense of their current precarious state is important as these are by and

¹ In the developing world in 2008, the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary education was 96 to 100, and for secondary education it was 95 to 100. The ratio is far worse at the tertiary level in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, with only 67 and 76 females to 100 males enrolled.

large highly qualified professionals whose major career choices, including a willingness to immigrate for the sake of their careers, indicate a high degree of willingness to embrace what Giroux (2010) calls “casino capitalism” (p. 340) as they make and remake their own human capital to meet the ever increasing demands for an increasingly credentialed and flexible educational workforce.

Other examples of government sponsored global teacher recruitment, as well as the intensifying flexibility demanded of the global supply of teacher labor, include Baltimore’s recruitment of Filipino citizens; Texas’ recruitment of bilingual teachers from various Hispanic countries; the recruitment of Turkish nationals to teach various subjects in charter schools across America; the recruitment of South African teachers for the United Kingdom; the recruitment by Bermuda, an Anglophone county, of all kinds of American teachers; and the recruitment by Singapore, an Anglophone nation, of English teachers worldwide (Degazon-Johnson, 2011; Mathews, 2009). Most but not all international teachers recruited for American public schools specialize in math, science, or special education (American Federation of Teachers, 2009; Degazon-Johnson, 2011). Teachers who find themselves oversupplied in one location may find themselves in high demand elsewhere; but those who accept what may appear to be fabulously well-paid foreign assignments sometimes do so at extraordinary personal cost and are not infrequently disappointed to learn the actual salaries are not so fabulous relative to higher than expected local living costs (Diaz, 2011). While certain local and national authorities in economically developed locales scour the globe to fill teaching slots that locals appear to shun, such as “dangerous” high poverty urban assignments or “difficult” math, science or special education work, the United Nations has acknowledged a global teacher shortage which is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, places that can places that can least

afford to lose their best teachers, but that are increasingly targeted by recruiters for U.S. schools (UNESCO, 2011). It should be noted that these teachers have been educated in institutions heavily subsidized by developing nation states as part of a long term agenda for advancing the nation state; so their recruitment to wealthier parts of the globe, their so-called brain drain, also represents material economic loss to the economically developing nations that trained them. All of these examples hint at incalculable human costs, demanding redress for the sake of global human rights and justice. At the same time, these examples highlight the unevenness of the effects of globalization and of these global flows, with the wealthiest countries usually best able to recruit the most highly qualified teachers from the poorest countries who can least afford to spare them, but who cannot compete salary-wise, and with the poorest teachers often finding themselves sometimes trapped by new kinds of poverty or exploitation far from the families and homes they are working to support. The burgeoning trend towards international teacher recruitment by local and national governments, in tandem with intergovernmental initiatives to dramatically increase the world's teacher supply, suggests that indeed teachers are a highly valued commodity in the knowledge economy, but that globally current neoliberal policy trends mitigate against raising teacher compensation as part of a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy, and to otherwise addressing complex chronic issues plaguing schools including the global child poverty crisis. Rather, these global flows of teacher labor provide a short term response to real or perceived teacher shortages while reinforcing the neoliberal trends towards the isolation and devaluation of all workers and all people and the pressure for individuals rather than systems to solve systemic problems (Giroux, 2010; Gutierrez, 2009; Ong, 1999; Ong, 2006).

The case of New York City's Caribbean teachers is of special interest in part because it has not yet received formal scholarly attention and also because these teachers themselves have in recent years begun to express their desire to make their plight more widely known (The Black Institute, 2010; Degazon-Johnson, 2011; Silvera, 2011). In addition, it is important because it holds the potential to lend insights, particularly grassroots insights from teachers themselves, into the globalization of education in general and the globalization of the teacher labor in particular. Focusing on their situation as they report it through surveys and interviews may help to clarify how workers themselves position themselves within global flows of labor, and may elucidate the mechanisms by which they are globally governed to meet the increasingly complex demands of an ever globalizing educational marketplace. It is hoped that this work will increase understanding of some of the human and other costs of this instance of globalizing teacher labor, and by extension other instances of it, providing information about how teachers and their families, in New York City and in their home countries, are affected.

Key Questions

Key research questions include: How does this global deployment of teachers actually work? In other words, what strategies were used to identify and recruit them, and what contractual promises were made to them? How are these global teachers and their families adapting to their international deployment? How do they, or do they make sense of their international migration as a transgenerational class project? What were the pull factors? In other words, were they counting on their move to provide better educational and career opportunities for their children, and has it? What are the human costs and benefits, especially for these teachers and their families, but also for students and school systems in their home countries and in their

new country? Is their recruitment part of a brain drain from their country? (Gardner, 2007). What if any gendered responses emerge? What if any influence does this practice appear to be having on teacher labor organizing? How do these teachers make sense of their situation and what do they want now? What advice do they have for those who might follow their example? What insights do they have into the challenges faced by American urban public education? What if any rights do they claim as humans, as workers, as potential U.S. citizens, and as global citizens?

Limitations and Delimitations

Investigation of these questions is limited to Caribbean New York City public school teachers and their adult children who agreed to participate in this research. Some were contacted through introductions by The Black Institute in Manhattan, and others were contacted via introductions from the African American and Caribbean Educators Association in Queens. The Black Institute is an activist think tank located in New York City and dedicated to “[shaping] intellectual discourse and dialogue and [impacting] public policy uniquely from a Black perspective (a perspective which includes all people of color in the United States and throughout the Diaspora)”, and they have been facilitating New York City Caribbean teacher activism since at least 2011 (The Black Institute, 2010). The African American and Caribbean Educators Association is a non-partisan mutual aid society supporting teachers in New York City with encouragement and fellowship. I, the researcher, have no financial or other affiliation with either The Black Institute or the African American Caribbean Educators Association.

Seeking to shed light on the experiences of some of New York City's public school teachers recruited from selected Anglophone countries in 2001 and 2003, I interviewed several of these teachers, as well as some members of their families from March, 2013 through August,

2013. I conducted most of these interviews in person in New York City, and in Trinidad and Tobago, with only one interview conducted over the telephone only. I hoped to learn what motivated these teachers to make this move, how they and their families were coping with some of the special challenges of it, why they in particular may have been chosen over other similarly qualified applicants, and how their particular experiences speak to the wider experiences of flexible knowledge workers operating in a globalized arena. I sought initial introductions to a few of these teachers and their adult children first through such formal organizations as those listed just above. The Black Institute and its affiliated organizations introduced me to two Trinidadian families who participated in my study, and they also called my attention to The International Youth Association (TIYA), a group working to advance the immigration rights of the now adult children of the recruited Caribbean teachers. People I met through these groups also introduced me to two Guyanese families and a St. Vincent family who participated in the study. Another avenue for introductions which proved fruitful was the African American Caribbean Education Association, through which I met many Jamaican scholars and teachers, including one of the families and other participants.

Chapter Two

Literature Review: The Global Context for International Teacher Recruitment

Introduction

International teacher recruitment, and in particular the U.S. public school recruitment of highly trained teachers from “developing” countries, has become an illusory panacea for alleged teacher shortages, a short-term strategy for staffing classrooms instead of a longer-term and much more difficult and costly set of strategies for really prioritizing education as a necessary core value of a just and sustainable knowledge economy. Focusing on the case of New York City’s Caribbean teachers and privileging their testimony about their responses to such recruitment elucidates many of the transnational and transgenerational contours of this emerging strategy of the neoliberalized global governance of teacher labor. The special insider/outsider perspective of these teachers also offers valuable insights into what is wrong with and how it may be possible to improve some of America’s public schools. The gendered dynamics of such recruitment should also interest policy makers.

Seeking to better understand the significance of New York City’s recruitment of Caribbean teachers for that city’s public schools, this literature review establishes a definition of the knowledge economy with particular attention to the teacher’s role within it. Alleged teacher shortages are considered, as well as various governmental responses to such shortages. The solution of international teacher recruitment, especially by some U.S. public schools, is considered next. Some historical context is offered for the specific recruitment of Caribbean teachers by New York City public schools. The flexible capital of the worker in late capitalism is next discussed, as well as evidence of the gendered nature of the transgenerational class projects

concomitant with labor immigration. Finally, broad theoretical critiques of the neoliberalization of globalized educational policy are briefly reviewed.

Overview of the Literature Review

I begin with a discussion of the globalization of teacher labor for the knowledge economy, including the teacher's role in it. I consider the promise of the knowledge economy as well as some notions of teacher oversupply and shortage at local, national, and international levels, how these notions interface with the teacher's role in the knowledge economy, and some underlying causes and sustainable solutions that have already been identified.

Next I present and discuss a few governmental and intergovernmental responses to particular kinds of teacher shortages, attending especially to Singapore's international recruiting and to the U.S. recruitment of teachers from the Philippines, and considering how each case illustrates neoliberal trends in the globalization of educational policy. I discuss some of the human and other costs and benefits of this trend.

I then turn to the literature on the international recruitment of teachers, especially the recruitment of overseas teachers by U.S. public schools, attending particularly to the very limited literature available on the recruitment of Caribbean teachers for New York City public schools. I attend particularly to the recruitment of teachers from predominantly Anglophone islands.

In the fourth section of the literature review, I review some relevant historical context for the recruitment of Caribbean teachers for New York City public schools. This includes a brief discussion of the historical complexity of the Caribbean region (Higman, 2010); some other Caribbean colonial and postcolonial context; recent census data about the Caribbean immigrant population in New York City (Shaw-Taylor & Tuch, 2007), some scholarly literature discussing

Caribbean immigration to the United States generally; mention of Caribbean nurses immigrating to Canada (Flynn, 2011; Higman, 2010); and mention of the U.S. “occupation” of Trinidad and Tobago during the Second World War (Higman, 2010; Neptune, 2007).

My readings of Caribbean sociology and Caribbean feminism (Barriteau, 2003; Barrow and Reddock, 2001; Bose and Kim, 2009; Downes, 2003; Downes, 2004; Leo-Rynne, 1999; Lewis, 2003; Marshall, 1972; Miller, 2004; Mohammed, 2004; Reddock, 1994; Reddock, 2009; Scher, 2010; Thomas-Hope, 2009) explore the construction of gender roles in the Caribbean. Theories of male marginalization (Barriteau, 2003; Bose and Kim, 2009; Miller, 2004; Downes, 2003; Downes, 2004; Mohammed, 2004), and men’s and women’s gendered roles in work and in the family (Barriteau, 2003; Barrow, 2001; Hodges, 2002; Wilson, 2001) proved of particular relevance to this project.

Next I consider notions of the flexible capital of the worker in late capitalism, particularly referencing the work of Aihwa Ong (1999, 2006), but also drawing upon David Harvey, Richard Sennet, and Paul Willis. I bring these theoretical considerations of flexible capital to bear upon my new theory of the flexible capital of American teacher labor in general and global teacher labor in particular in this early twenty first century era of globalized education. Here I hypothesize how or to what extent the flexible capital descriptions and predictions developed by Ong and others map onto the lived experiences of New York City’s Caribbean teachers.

I discuss how flexible labor may interact with gendered transgenerational class projects (Rowbotham, 1999); and how these projects may be fruitfully interpreted through a materialist feminist lens (Hennessy, 1993). Before having collected any data, I could not say with any authority that the New York City recruitment of Caribbean teachers has played out in particular gendered ways or that gender has played a role in the way these teachers have adapted

themselves and their families to the challenges of this extraordinary international career opportunity. I hypothesized, however, based on the preliminary research covered in this literature review as well as my own miscellaneous anecdotal observations, that this would be the case; and my subsequent research bore this out. I briefly explain my plan to use the data to first develop a schema of class (and possibly gender) for these teachers, and then to interpret that schema from a poststructuralist, feminist materialist standpoint.

I consider broad theoretical critiques of the neoliberalization of globalized educational policy, and what this may mean for global teacher labor. Finally, I orient the U.S. recruitment of Caribbean teachers within a globalized neoliberalized framework, briefly discussing the relative merits of neoliberal or human capital versus alternative social imaginaries, including human rights and capabilities.

The Promise of the Knowledge Economy

Working in tandem with the hegemony of neoliberalism in the era of globalization, the concept of the knowledge economy, also known as the knowledge based economy, has arisen to organize labor supportive of a supposedly post-industrial global order, bearing out a prediction Lyotard made almost three decades ago:

Knowledge in the form of an informational commodity indispensable to production power is already, and will continue to be, a major—perhaps the major—stake in the worldwide competition for power. It is conceivable that the nation-states will one day fight for control of information, just as they battled in the past for control over territory, and afterwards for control of access to and exploitation of raw materials and cheap labor. (Lyotard, 1984, p. 5)

The battles for territory, raw materials, and cheap labor rage on, and the battle for knowledge has emerged as the most strategic of all, the one on which all the other “post-industrial” battles depend, whether industrial, commercial, political or military. The OECD’s

2009 PISA Report corroborates the primacy of knowledge to post-industrial success,² and the first question the report asks readers and policy makers to ask of high-performing education systems is, “How do they pay teachers compared to the way they pay other highly skilled workers” (OECD, 2009, p. 6), evidence that the most educationally successful of these generally post-industrial nations acknowledge the importance of teachers in at least this one way. The notion of post-industrialism needs to be problematized in the global context, however, as societies the world over still rely upon a full complement of industrial production, whether at home or abroad, in support of economic and social objectives. Workers in a truly post-industrial global economy may require a higher level of education for new kinds of jobs, whether in the absence of industrial jobs or possibly in the presence of more highly specialized industrial as well as service jobs. There tends to be less demand for uneducated, unskilled workers in either scenario, and with knowledge widely accepted as the prime productive force, “the gap between developed and developing countries will grow ever wider in the future” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 5). “Clearly, not everyone will find a role in the new weightless economy, [although] many continue to expect, against increasing odds, to be remunerated and respected for an ability and a disposition to work in traditional manual ways” (Willis, 2003, p. 397). As Bauman (1998) has observed, we are now witnessing “a world-wide *restratification*, in the course of which a new socio-cultural hierarchy, a world-wide scale is put together” (p. 70). Globalization can be one euphemism for this *restratification*, which might also be understood as imperialism, or as a new way to make wage slavery more palatable and more easily imposed. Focusing on “the heightened role of knowledge in economic practices,” the knowledge-based economy is intrinsically global, technologically networked, and linked to the interests of multinational firms (Williams, 2010,

² The complete report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development on the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment can be found at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/10/61/48852548.pdf>.

p. 6). However industrial or post-industrial economies are classified, the knowledge-based economy is now regularly discussed as a new variety of capitalism (Fairclough, 2003, p. 4; Williams, 2010, p. 6). Technology, skills, and a highly educated labor force are all three needed for this new knowledge-based economy (Powell & Snellman, 2004; Williams, 2010, p. 6), and teachers are key in preparing workers in all three of these essential areas, leading the way in their classrooms and promising a brighter, more intelligent future for everyone.

The promise of the knowledge economy is, however, a promise unfulfilled. In theory, mass higher education was meant to lead to mass higher employment, to a society full of highly educated people, highly functioning and highly paid in meaningful knowledge work regularly calling upon their highly cultivated skills. In fact, that has not been working out in the United States or Great Britain, two prominent neoliberal world leaders where this partially planned, partially natural experiment has been playing out for the past several decades. In *The Mismanagement of Talent* (2004), Phillip Brown and Anthony Hesketh use U.S. Department of Labor statistics to show that the number of so-called knowledge jobs has not grown that much relative to the growth of jobs overall or even relative to the growth of the population. Having established the unspectacular growth of knowledge jobs in the U.S., Brown and Hesketh turn their attention to a particular example from their own country, England: Focusing on the tertiary education and immediate post-graduate recruitment of fast-track managers, these authors explore their thesis that the knowledge based economy is making promises it is not keeping. Using a mixed methodology including interviews with recent graduates pursuing fast-track management careers, and observations of special recruitment centers established to match the best and brightest of them with plum entry-level management positions, Brown and Hesketh (2004) demonstrate that in this instance at least, the promise of mass higher education has not resulted in

the dream of mass higher employment prospects for the great majority, or in other words for the masses of these applicants: “[W]e find little evidence to support the view that the demand for knowledge workers is growing rapidly” (p. 8). There simply are not enough top jobs for the number of top students fully prepared to step into them. At least part of the explanation may be found in the careful way these authors define and discuss the concept of employability:

A major weakness of the consensus view is that it ignores differences in the power of individuals and social groups to enhance their employability at the expense of others. The idea that the domestic competition for jobs has lost its intensity (and political significance) because there is knowledge work available for those with the appropriate employability skills is not supported by the evidence . . . Evidence drawn for the United States and Britain will show that the expansion of higher education cannot be explained by an exponential increase in the demand for knowledge workers . . . A growing supply of knowledge workers does not mean that they will find knowledge work. (Brown and Hesketh, 2004, pp. 22-23)

This important distinction runs parallel to what Brown and Hesketh and many others have identified as a fatal fissure running right through the heart of the neoliberal agenda: the displacement of too much responsibility for individual successes onto often desperate, unconnected, unsupported and decontextualized individuals; and the corollary absolution of wider systems from responsibility for the success or failure of the individuals that comprise them. “Governments . . . now take it as a mere fact of life . . . that all must bow to the emerging logic of a globalizing knowledge-driven economy, and have embraced or at least made adjustments to ‘neo-liberalism’” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 4). The powerful and usually much better funded rhetoric behind neoliberal, pro-corporate solutions effectively silences alternative perspectives, including the possibility that individuals at the ground level may be hurt by decisions that profit a relatively few powerful decision makers who stand to profit, or the possibility that submission to the neoliberal agenda may not be necessary or inevitable. Willis (2003) argues that, “Young people are unconscious foot soldiers in the long front of modernity,

involuntary and disoriented conscripts in battles never explained” (p. 390), and I argue that teachers are also often such unconscious foot soldiers in knowledge economy strategies that Jessop has identified as inherently global (Jessop, 2004, p. 160; Williams, 2010, p. 6). It might even make sense to think of teachers as the “drill sergeants of the knowledge economy,” a phrase I hereby coin to describe the way teachers are currently being deployed to train student foot soldiers for ongoing global business and other kinds of warfare. Soldiers must be trained to unquestionably obey orders so they can be deployed most effectively in warfare, as the student foot soldiers of the knowledge economy must be trained to defer to its logic so they can be deployed most effectively in economic transactions. Key to the success of these strategies of conscription for accumulation is the persistence in ignoring the unevenness of global labor exchanges, ignoring among other things the fact that any job any individual accepts is a job someone else cannot have, and that it further means that skilled worker is no longer available to do that kind of work elsewhere. An example of this would be when Filipino or Caribbean teachers choose to build their careers and incomes by immigrating to America, but potentially at the expense of qualified teachers or potential teachers already residing in America, at the expense of their native school systems where their absence may be sorely felt, and at the expense of the organizing potential of global teacher labor. In other words, the neoliberal knowledge economy promise must remain unfulfilled unless and until the global system generates and sustains enough jobs for all the people who need to work, including knowledge workers: “It is argued that the major problem is not the employability skills of individuals, although there is clearly room for improvement, but a failure to generate enough good jobs” (Brown & Hesketh, 2004, p. 8). And, I would add, this major problem is inseparable from the failure to create supportive and sustainable local communities, including great public schools. This holds true for

knowledge workers of all kinds, and not less so for teachers, who are needed everywhere and who should therefore be able to find gainful employment everywhere, including in their home countries.

Teaching in the Knowledge Economy

In *Teaching in the Knowledge Society: Education in the Age of Insecurity* (2003), Andy Hargreaves also discusses the broken promises of the knowledge economy, focusing on the role of the teacher and noting that “our schools are preparing young people neither to work well in the knowledge economy nor to live well in a strong civil society” (p. 2). Hargreaves (2003) makes a distinction between the knowledge economy and the knowledge society, noting that the former “primarily serves the private good” while the latter “encompasses the public good” (p. 1). As I read Hargreaves’ ideal knowledge society, no student would ever come to school hungry, because that child would be imbedded in a society with sufficient knowledge to properly value that child and provide for her accordingly. My reading of Hargreave’s more limited definition of the knowledge economy suggests that no student would ever come to school hungry, because that would hamper that student’s development as an optimal contributor to an economy fueled by knowledge workers. Hargreaves quotes the business theorist and knowledge economy expert Peter Drucker in noting that, “Knowledge workers will give the emerging knowledge society its character, its leadership and its profile. They may not be the ruling class of the knowledge society, but they are already its leading class” (Drucker, as cited in Hargreaves, 2003, p. 19; Drucker, 1994, p. 80). Hargreaves (2003) focuses on the role of teachers in this knowledge leadership, contrasting the harsh and even degrading realities of the teaching profession today with the ideally respected and supported intellectual teachers who could help students cultivate

the creativity and critical capacities needed for success in the promised knowledge society (pp. 2-3). These capacities in need of cultivation by teachers should include “deep cognitive learning, creativity, and ingenuity among students . . . problem-solving, risk-taking, trust in the collaborative process, ability to cope with change and commitment to continuous improvement as organizations” (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 3). This adds up to an untenable juxtaposition of expectations for teachers: First, they should be prepared to accept pay, working conditions and job security far below that of comparably educated professionals. At the same time, they are called upon to selflessly devote themselves to the complex and sometimes even Herculean task of equipping their often impoverished students to be the foot soldiers of the creative economy. Add to this the actual physical separation of a foreign recruited teacher from her own country, culture, and family, and the difficult cultural adaptations both teachers and their students must make while learning is expected to proceed, and the complexity of the challenges to effective teaching appear to increase exponentially. How can poorly supported, undervalued, and constantly criticized professionals—and in the case of overseas recruited teachers sometimes even economically exploited and human trafficked teachers—effectively meet such daunting expectations? How can a teacher, highly educated and skilled by the standards of the knowledge economy and obviously very much needed by it, help students cultivate the necessary complement of critical thinking and creative skills in the absence of professional pay, job security, and high social standing? In the case of overseas recruited teachers, they often don’t even have their own families to go home to, so how is it possible for them to support both their own difficult situation and high educational expectations for their students? I do not offer simple answers to these rhetorical questions, but I believe further empirical research into international teacher recruitment may yield some important albeit partial answers.

In Teachers Have it Easy: The Big Sacrifices and Small Salaries of America's Teachers (2005), Moulthrop, Calegari, and Eggers present case studies, interviews, statistics and other data to build their argument that teachers in America are badly underpaid relative to the difficulty and importance of the work they do:

Though respect for the profession has grown over the last 30 years, the indignities suffered by teachers and accepted by communities are at odds with the esteem in which we hold them. Teachers with master's degrees and PhDs are often seen painting houses and cutting lawns over the summers, working extra nights and weekends to make ends meet, and neglecting their own children so they can continue to teach ours. These and other subtle indignities - such as many teachers' inability to buy homes near the schools where they work - are tacitly accepted as part of the contract. (p. 5)

Describing numerous examples in painstaking detail, these authors show the impossibility for many American teachers of making ends meet even in poverty, and the tragic choice many of them are forced to make between earning enough to support their own children or giving their all for other people's children. In *American Teacher*, a 2011 documentary movie version of these findings, co-producer Dave Eggers and narrator and political activist Matt Damon highlight some of the human costs of this situation for teachers and their families. For example, Erik Benner, a suburban Texas teacher with 15 years of experience is interviewed along with his ex-wife and one of their two teenage daughters as each of them describes the impossibility of holding the marriage and family together in the near total absence of the teacher father, who felt forced to supplement what he called his "teaching habit" with coaching and night shifts at home improvement stores. These authors, in both the book and movie versions, also present a range of creative solutions selected districts have devised to compensate teachers for their lack of adequate professional compensation, things like smaller class sizes, bonus pay for achieving certain benchmarks (also known as performance pay), and the public recognition of distinguished teaching awards.

Three more desperate or extreme measures are also presented by Moulthrop et al. (2005), including Teach for America, discount coupons on tans and lawnmower repair, and recruiting teachers overseas from less developed economies. Teach for America has been controversial since its founding in 1990, sending competitively selected uncertified recent college graduates to teach in some of America's most difficult to staff urban and rural schools for 2 years; but whether or not the program tends to encourage counterproductive staff turnover or hamper job security for certified, experienced teachers, "intensive ongoing support" appears to make a strong positive difference to the success of these continuing natural experiments, suggesting that such support might make a difference for other teachers, too (p. 269). "Paying teachers with coupons, discounts, and affordable lawn-mower repair" sounds like a bad joke, but Moulthrop et al. (2005) explain that these strategies are a serious part of a complex teacher incentive program implemented in DeSoto County, Mississippi, in lieu of actually raising teacher's salaries (pp. 269-272). Special home-buying programs are also mentioned, including U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development offers to sell HUD properties to teachers at a 50 percent discount, and special mortgage subsidies to teachers in Chicago, St. Louis, and San Jose (p. 270). Moulthrop et al. (2005) quote an Atlanta high school English teacher who was discomfited to find herself eligible for such programs when she decided to pursue home ownership:

They are the same kind of programs that are offered to people coming off welfare. It's not offensive; just shocking. It was a huge surprise that, as an educated person with a career and a master's degree behind me, I would be eligible for the same program as people who dropped out of high school and didn't have any real work experience. The perception that someone who was a teacher would need these programs was troubling. (p. 271).

This needs to be contextualized within the decades-long devaluation of the buying power of the earned American dollar that has gone largely unremarked in the public discourse,³ and equally troubling is the fact that there seems to be very little widespread public indignation about the impoverished circumstances increasing numbers of teachers (along with increasing numbers of other workers) must endure, regularly working two or three jobs and working full-time throughout the summer to supplement incomes that actually do not cover necessary living expenses for them and their families. On the contrary, it often seems it is becoming more and more fashionable to scapegoat teachers (as well as other workers) for the difficult circumstances they often find themselves in, as when the nominally liberal filmmaker Davis Guggenheim uncritically presents various criticisms of teachers in his popular 2010 documentary, *Waiting for “Superman.”* For example, Guggenheim suggests that rather than impoverished neighborhoods leading to failing schools, failing schools might actually be largely to blame for the poverty and other chronic kinds of malaise besetting the neighborhoods where they are located. This unsupported assertion might appeal to conservative fans of charter schools, or to readers of corporate funded, anti-teacher blogs such as teachersunionexposed.com, but it makes no more sense than crediting the schools and teachers in well-to-do neighborhoods with the plenty that

³ According to U.S. Census data (<http://www.census.gov/main/www/access.html>), the median price of a house in Illinois, unadjusted for inflation, was \$3,277 in 1940, and \$130,800 in 2000. (Housing data for 2011, the latest available data, is scheduled for release in late 2012). According to the Dollar Times website calculator (<http://www.dollartimes.com/calculators/inflation.htm>), the 1940 buying power of \$3,277 would meet \$39,394.22 of costs in 2000 dollars, or \$52,823.37 in 2012 dollars. According to the People History website (<http://www.thepeoplehistory.com/1940s.html>), and U.S. Census data, in 1940 the average median American income in was \$1,725. The average American income was, according to U.S. Census data, \$57,289 in 2000. This means someone earning the average median American income would need to spend 1.9 times that income to buy a median priced house in Illinois in 1940; but someone earning the average median American income in 2000 would need to spend 2.3 times that income to buy a median priced house in Illinois. Furthermore, most families could have made this home purchase based on one earned household income in 1940, but the same purchase will require two or more earned incomes per household today (Warren and Tyagi, 2003). This illustrates a deterioration of the buying power of the U.S. dollar from 1940 to 2000, from a time when one average income could meet a mortgage multiple of 1.9, to a time when two or more average incomes would be needed to meet the higher mortgage multiple of 2.3.

surrounds them. No affluent parent would dream of thanking her child's teacher for her own family's million dollar home or luxury car, and it makes no more sense for an impoverished parent to blame her child's teacher for her family's substandard housing or crime-ridden neighborhood. Teachers deserve neither such praise nor such censure, and teacher scapegoating of this kind offers one more red herring to avoid facing the problem of poverty which must be tackled in tandem with educational reform, rather than blaming teachers for poverty in general.

Brighthouse (2007) has also written extensively in the link between property taxes and school quality. Moulthrop et al. (2005) take a view more sympathetic to the teacher's perspective, expressing concern about cheap substitutes for adequate professional pay and material support for teachers, and explaining "that the more we rely on [such gimmicks] to do the hard work of attracting and retaining high-quality teachers, the more we will convince ourselves the problem has been solved" (p. 273). International teacher recruitment thus becomes an illusory panacea for alleged teacher shortages, a short-term strategy for staffing classrooms instead of a longer-term and much more difficult and costly set of strategies for really prioritizing education as a necessary core value of a just and sustainable knowledge economy.

Global Teacher Shortage?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) declared by the United Nations in 2002 aspire to end poverty around the globe by 2015 (Chatterji, 2011), and there is widespread agreement that they are unlikely to be met on time or perhaps ever without a massive increase in the world supply of qualified teachers (Chatterji, 2011). The two MDGs most directly influencing education in general and women's and girls' educational well-being in particular are the second and third: "2. Achieve universal primary education" and "3. Promote gender equality

and empower women.” According to the United Nations Development Programme, neither of these goals is on track to be met by 2015. Girls still lag behind boys in school enrollments, especially at the tertiary level, and women still lag behind men in paid employment and political and other kinds of leadership roles (United Nations Development Program, 2012).⁴ The shortage of qualified teachers, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, has been identified as a key deficiency that must be addressed before the second and third MDGs can be met, with double the current number needed (United Nations Development Program, 2012). Both rich and poor countries are facing teacher shortages in key areas from the primary level upwards, but while some countries need to actively expand their teaching force, others do not (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009). While dozens of sub-Saharan, South Asian, and other countries evidently go begging for qualified teachers, many qualified teachers in the United States and Europe face massive layoffs, and newly minted teacher graduates face long-term unemployment or underemployment in substitute or other kinds of provisional knowledge work that may never ripen into the full time professional careers for which they trained (Anderson, 2010; Giroux, 2010). The UNESCO Institute for Statistics divides countries into those that need more teachers and those that do not (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009), and attention to the flows of teaching labor between these regions may elucidate essential contours of the global governmentality of education, as the global teaching force is organized in the service of both humanitarian and neoliberal objectives. In addition, Giroux (2010) has argued that massive teacher layoffs must be understood as part of the wider “crisis of neoliberalism—of casino capitalism and its ongoing assault on public goods, the social contract, and any remaining social protections offered by the social state” (p. 340).

⁴ In the developing world in 2008, the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary education was 96 to 100, and for secondary education it was 95 to 100. The ratio is far worse at the tertiary level in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, with only 67 and 76 females to 100 males enrolled (United Nations Development Program, 2012).

Particular attention to the ways teachers themselves, especially those affected by international recruitment, are making sense of their current precarious state is important, as these are by and large highly qualified professionals whose major career choices, including a willingness to immigrate for the sake of their careers, indicate a high degree of willingness to embrace what Giroux (2010) calls “casino capitalism” (p. 340) as they make and remake their own human capital to meet the ever increasing demands for an increasingly credentialed and flexible educational workforce.

Neoliberal Responses to Global Teacher Supply and Demand

Ong’s ethnographies of particular Asian responses to neoliberalism provide rich examples of the ways Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and China are responding to their own needs to adapt for the knowledge economy, and in particular to the ways they are “reengineering citizens,” including the strategic deployment of teachers to prepare workforces able to meet global economic demands (Ong, 2006, p. 186). The notion of “reengineering citizens” parallels Peters’ reading of Lyotard when he writes, “The game of technology, as opposed to science whose goal is truth, follows the principle of optimal performance (i.e., maximising output, minimising input)” (Peters, 2011, p. 97). This privileging of technology over science is readily apparent in Ong’s observations of Singapore, which has historically been a nation of immigrants; and in more recent years has crafted immigration policies to accommodate both the low-skilled immigrants desperately needed for manufacturing, domestic work, and other jobs Singaporeans do not want, and the high-skilled immigrants needed for biotechnology and finance and other jobs native Singaporeans may lack the training and skills to perform (Ong, 2006, pp. 186-188). According to Ong, this situation “represents a new ethical regime assembled around claims to

intellectual excellence, scholarships, employment, and valuable citizens” (2006, p. 187). It may also represent the shift that Lyotard identified or predicted away from science, truth, or justice, and towards technology, efficiency, and financial optimizations. In this “new ethical regime,” high-skilled workers so outrank low-skilled workers that only the former may aspire to a likelihood of steady employment at comfortable wages, or even to citizenship itself. Workers the world over are finding themselves similarly situated with the correspondence between very particular human capital enhancements and employment prospects, and they are finding themselves in truly global competition for career placement, or even for placement in career training opportunities, such as university placements and scholarships, and teachers are more crucial than ever in helping to prepare students and workers to take good advantage of these possibilities. In Singapore:

Students are concerned about career chances, and some believe that they must compete with foreign students for university scholarships . . . Singaporean professionals feel that they are losing out to foreigners, who seem to be preferred by the government-led corporations and private industry. The majority seem won over by the state argument that expatriates add much needed value to the entrepreneurial economy, but they fear competing within ever widening scales of markets and geopolitical space. (Ong, 2006, p. 192)

This fear appears to be well-founded for Singaporean teachers, as the Ministry of Education in Singapore maintains a very active presence on teacher job-hunting websites throughout the world, encouraging and accepting applications from qualified native-Anglophone teachers from around the world to strengthen Singapore’s teaching supply, whilst diluting the number of suitable positions available for qualified Singaporean applicants.⁵ Web-savvy foreign applicants are lured with the promise of “greater career options, professional development, and more flexibility in managing their career and personal lives” (Singaporean Ministry of Education,

⁵ The Singaporean Ministry of Education’s solicitation for applications may be viewed at their website, <http://www.moe.gov.sg/careers/teach/>

2012), whilst Singaporean teachers themselves are subjected to the risk of “being renativized, of becoming subaltern subjects, as in colonial times where colonials, not locals, were the citizens” (Ong, 2006, p. 194). Freed from the obligation to perform national service (Ong, 2006, p. 193) and valued for “the kind of border-crossing talent that can capitalize on differences in various domains of worth” (Ong, 2006, p. 188), foreign K-12 teachers who respond to this call may aspire to a kind of global economic citizenship, “a citizenship based on value-added human capital [that] suggests that not all citizens are intelligent enough, or risk-taking enough, to be similarly valued” (Ong, 2006, p. 194). Thus, the successful foreign teaching applicant must document and demonstrate not only the appropriate educational and professional qualifications, but also the “self-management . . . to be globally competitive and politically compliant” (Ong, 2006, p. 194). A Singaporean citizen, by virtue of her birth and location in her home country, may have trouble competing with the level of risk-taking displayed by a foreign applicant who in turn must actually take the extraordinary risk of leaving her home country and culture and plunging into what for many must be a very foreign environment free of social safety networks such as families and friends. Some foreign applicants may be motivated by a longing for adventure, and others may be motivated by a dearth of employment opportunities in their home locations, but for whatever reason, mobile knowledge workers are placed in fierce competition with one another and with native teachers, in the hope of advancing their career prospects in a new country. “If the new extraterritoriality of the elite feels like intoxicating freedom, the territoriality of the rest feels like home ground, and ever more like prison,” according to Bauman (1998, p. 23), and the uneven access to freedom of mobility is thrown into ever greater relief. Peters has noted that, in the case of New Zealand’s current neoliberal educational experiment with school choice, “it is clear that it is the school rather than the consumer which effectively

chooses its intake” (Peters, 2011, p. 114); and a corollary could be said of international teacher recruitment and international teacher jobhunting: It is clear that the school rather than the teacher effectively chooses who will work where:

In fact, the freedom presupposed in relation to theories of consumer choice depends ultimately on economic criteria, and in this sense the freedom is “illusory” as the promises it makes cannot be provided for *all*—for within the zero-sum context in which the competitive market choice is structured, the “freedom” of the few is premised on the “non-freedom” of many. (Peters, 2011, p. 114)

How free is the native Singaporean English teacher who cannot find work while Singapore recruits English teachers from abroad? How free is the American teacher recruited to Singapore who never would have chosen to go if she could have found work in her home state of Iowa? Pitted against all the other unemployed highly qualified native-English speaking teachers in the world, the freedom of Singaporean teachers to teach in Singapore may be as illusory as the freedom of non-Singaporean teachers to do so. The freedom of Caribbean teachers to choose to accept job offers from the New York City Department of Education must be similarly interrogated. This study makes a contribution to knowledge by seeking to better understand how the teachers themselves frame their own freedom and their own choices.

Ong uses the concept of “flexible citizenship” in discussing the choices made by business migrants and refugees “who work in one location while their families are lodged in ‘safe havens’ elsewhere” (Ong, 1999, p. 214). She references Saskia Sassen’s notion of “economic citizenship” which Sassen uses to argue that intergovernmental organizations and transnational firms must be held accountable when governments have lost or ceded such accountability; however, Ong argues that that states have not actually lost control, but rather have “refashioned sovereignty to meet the challenges of global markets and supranational organizations” (Ong, 1999, p. 215). Considering the Singaporean Ministry of Education international call for teacher applications in

this light, the state can be seen to be adapting to global market challenges, or in other words adapting more to neoliberal than to Keynesian goals, privileging the employment of eager, perhaps even desperate international teachers rather than higher employment rates, or perhaps greater bargaining power, for Singapore's homegrown teachers. Harvey has noted that "in the event of a conflict, the typical neoliberal state will tend to side with a good business climate as opposed to either the collective rights (and quality of life) of labour or the capacity of the environment to regenerate itself" (Harvey, 2011, p. 70), and he argues that a key characteristic of neoliberal practice is "the commodification of everything" (2011, p. 165). He further states:

Neoliberalization seeks to strip away the protective coverings that embedded liberalism allowed and occasionally nurtured. The general attack against labour has been two-pronged. The powers of trade unions and other working-class institutions are curbed or dismantled within a particular state (by violence if necessary). Flexible labour markets are established. (2011, p. 168)

According to this formulation, the recruitment of foreign teachers for the Singaporean teaching force have perhaps been deemed as enhancing the country's global competitiveness, a good the government may privilege above the right of native teachers to fill jobs that are considered well respected and fairly well paid in that country. The flexible teacher labor markets thus established cast "migration as an investment; the migrant is an investor. He is an entrepreneur of himself who incurs expenses to obtain some kind of improvement" (Foucault, 2008, p. 231). This study seeks to better understand the investments New York City's Caribbean teachers have made by committing themselves to teach in that city, and whether Foucault's model of "the migrant as an investor . . . an entrepreneur of himself" is borne out in their case. Furthermore, greater attention should be called to the considerable expenses flexible international teachers invest in themselves and their careers, sacrifices on the part of the teachers that can often lead to significant savings for the hiring authorities, a motivation never

emphasized by recruiters but one that has led to corruption and successful lawsuits by international teachers in at least two U.S. jurisdictions (Mathews, 2009; North, 2011; Silvera, 2011).

Whatever the stated and unstated reasons may be, recruiting teachers from overseas is a significant and troubling trend that calls for greater scholarly and public scrutiny (Gutierrez, 2009, p. 55). Some early research has been done on Filipino teachers in U.S. public schools, including a 2006 Loyola University master's thesis by Rhoda Rae Gutierrez, a 2011 documentary by Ramona S. Diaz, and a 2011 Emory University doctoral dissertation, on Indian teachers recruited for urban schools in the southeastern United States, by Alyssa Hadley Dunn, whose book on this subject was published in February, 2013. Gutierrez argues that such recruitment is a neoliberal response to a specious teacher shortage, perhaps even a manufactured crisis, and that the Filipino case in particular must be understood in relation to the colonial and postcolonial relationships between the Philippines and the United States. Diaz' documentary is more impressionistic than argumentative, viscerally conveying the human costs for the four female Filipina teachers she follows for 1 year as they transition into the Baltimore Public Schools. Diaz' poignant footage includes a baby less than 1-year-old who no longer knows her mother who left several months earlier to teach overseas, and black American teenagers laughing and bonding with their Filipina teachers while evidently making academic progress. One special education student says shyly to his Filipina teacher, "You have to come back next year . . . You taught us so much." One apparently tough-minded Filipina teacher in her 26th year of teaching is shown unable to hold back her tears as she tries to talk about the unexpected challenges of dealing with what seems to her the impolite and even aggressive behavior of many of her Baltimore students, and she says, "It hurts. It hurts. It hurts. It hurts." This is a side of teacher

recruitment and retention insufficiently attended to by the scholarly literature, the fact that even a highly trained and experienced teacher who is herself categorized as “diverse” or as a member of a minority group may find it emotionally and intellectually difficult to deal with students from cultural backgrounds different from her own who persistently present behavior that seems to her impolite or inappropriate. Foucault (2008) has drawn theoretical attention to the costs of migration, noting that in addition to material costs, “there will also be a psychological cost for the individual establishing himself in his new milieu” (p. 232). This can be as much of a problem for teachers who are American citizens as for immigrant teachers, and lasting solutions will need to go more than skin deep to effectively address such cross-cultural complexities. While raising thorny issues of this kind, this film dramatically illustrates the concern noted by Moulthrop et al., and by Hargreaves and others, that teachers are often pressed into making the tragic choice between actually caring for their own children or caring for other people’s children in order to earn enough money to provide adequately for their own children and other family members. Diaz’s film also illustrates the unevenness of such global exchanges, juxtaposing the laughing, happy American students—evidently happy to have such skilled and kind teachers, with the weeping, sad Filipino students—sad to have lost these same wonderful teachers. According to one teacher quoted in this film, at least one of these Filipino teachers claimed to be earning 25 times as much for her first year teaching in Baltimore as she did for her last year in the Philippines, further proof of the unevenness of globalized opportunities. This case also proves Harvey’s point that “a good business climate” (lower teacher salaries as opposed to higher taxes) will tend to be favored over the rights and quality of life of workers (Harvey, 2011, p. 70). The nurturing roles these women play, both as mothers and as teachers, has been effectively commodified in line with Harvey’s predictions, as the power for labor to organize is curbed and

“[f]lexible labour markets are established” (Harvey, 2011, p, 168). Few workers demonstrate greater flexibility than these Filipino teachers who leave behind everything they know, including their own families and the schools where they may have built up their careers and relationships over many years, in exchange for an American paycheck so low that it still qualifies them for welfare-type mortgage assistance and requires them to bunk up in shared bedrooms and apartments so they will have enough money left for remittances home. All four of the teachers profiled in Diaz’ film appear to be living “happily ever after” immigrant stories as of September, 2011, when PBS did follow-up stories on each of them, highlighting their successes in earning tenure and bringing their families to live in America with them.⁶ I know of no such follow-up conducted in the Philippines to see how Philippine schools and students are coping with the loss of many of their most accomplished teachers.

A Burgeoning Trend With Mounting Costs and Benefits

In addition to the Singaporean recruitment of English teachers and the Baltimore recruitment of Filipino and Indian teachers, examples of teacher recruitment, or as the leaders of some of the contributing countries call it, “teacher poaching” (Baker, 2002), are numerous and proliferating. In 2003, the National Education Association estimated that 15,000 internationally recruited teachers were teaching in American schools. In 2009 the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) issued a report entitled “Importing Educators—Causes and Consequences of International Teacher Recruitment.” Nearly 20,000 migrant teachers were reported to be working in the United States on H1-B (temporary work) visas at that time, and the AFT warned that many of them had been egregiously exploited by recruiters and others. This growing contingency of

⁶ Videos of each teacher and her family can viewed at http://www.pbs.org/pov/learning/film_update.php

what is arguably the most flexible teacher force in the world may be, as Gutierrez argues, “a neoliberal response to the U.S. teacher shortage” (Gutierrez, 2009, pp. 1, 13). The AFT reported the largest number of employer applications for hiring foreign teachers in Texas, New York, and California in 2009 (AFT, 2009), which is unsurprising because those are also the three most populous states in the country (United States Census Bureau).

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, in 2010 Texas was granted 3,592 H-1B visas for K-12 educators, and New York was granted 4,563 (Department of Labor, 2012). The United Kingdom has also been engaging in large scale overseas teacher recruitment for several years, for example issuing 6,000 teacher work permits to recruit Jamaican, South African, Indian, and other non-European teachers in 2011, many of these teachers of math and science (Baker, 2002). The Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration (ACTM) ratified the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) in the United Kingdom in June 2010, to encourage intergovernmental cooperation and cross-border recognition of teacher qualifications, and to call for regulatory frameworks for international teacher recruitment (ACTM, 2010). The ACTM, based in the United Kingdom, has worked closely with the National Education Association, based in the U.S.A., in efforts to address the data and research gaps on international teacher recruitment, retention and mobility and together these groups have called for greater attention to this issue which is so closely linked to the global shortfall of teachers said to be hampering achievement of the education Millennium Development Goals (Degazon-Johnson, 2010). These findings are aligned with the research that has been done by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), which has recommended the adoption and enforcement of ethical standards for the international recruitment of teachers, improved and accessible government data on the practice, and more training in cultural

adaptation and classroom management for the new foreign hires (www.aft.org). The AFT's final recommendation is arguably the most important, and the one that would effectively nullify all the others by eliminating most if not all of the need for foreign teacher recruitment: "Renew the commitment to make hard-to-staff U.S. schools more desirable places to teach and learn" (AFT, 2009). These activists argue that if teachers in the U.S. were better supported, more might enter and—most crucially—fewer would leave the profession, largely eliminating the motivation for school hiring authorities to recruit abroad. Whether such a pro-teacher development, unlikely in the current neoliberal paradigm, would eliminate the impetus for international teachers to immigrate is a separate question. Bauman's (1998) idea of tourists versus vagabonds offers one useful way to think about this: "The tourists travel because *they want to*: the vagabonds because *they have no other bearable choice*" (p. 93). More empirical research could shed light on whether internationally recruited teachers identify themselves more as tourists on a grand adventure or as vagabonds struggling to survive; and more theoretical analysis could help clarify where they could be placed on a continuum between tourists and vagabonds, which characteristics of each they share. More attention to the trend generally could help those involved understand the big picture of it, and how best to serve the interests of all stakeholders involved, including not just corporate interests or hiring authorities but also and especially teachers, students and families.

Dunn wrote her 2011 doctoral dissertation on international teacher recruitment, making class observations conducting in-depth interviews with principals and other hiring authorities and with four secondary teachers recruited from India to teach in an urban school district in the southeastern United States. One of Dunn's key findings was the questionable benefit of the cultural diversity overseas teachers allegedly bring to their urban American schools (2011,

p. 1399). On closer examination it emerged that the culture shock experienced by both the teachers and students in these situations gave the lie to the assumption “that because the teachers themselves were ‘diverse,’ they would work well with ‘diverse’ children” (Dunn, 2011, p. 1399). Rather, Dunn found the cultural mix appeared to hamper classroom management, with the Indian teachers expressing astonishment at what they viewed as the “academic apathy” of most of their American students (Dun, 2011, p. 1394). All four of the teachers Dunn interviewed identified the rampant and seemingly inexhaustible tolerance for misbehavior and academic failure as serious systemic problems teachers could not be expected to effectively address in the isolation of a classroom; while their principals lamented that these teachers, all of whom had advanced academic training and several years of successful experience teaching in India before coming to the U.S., simply did not know “how to deal with the kids” (Dunn, 2011, p. 1395). These teachers and principals agreed that “control” and “order” were necessary for effective teaching and learning (Dunn, 2011, p. 1396), but it seemed that while the Indian teachers expected a considerable measure of those goods to emanate from students’ self-control and from societal expectations of good behavior and striving for achievement, the principals expected that far more of the control could and would be imposed by the teachers themselves. Teachers who could not meet this expectation, who could not control these urban, largely very low income classrooms, were simply not asked back for a second year (Dunn, 2011, p. 1395). Dunn concluded that “the harsh reality is that it is easier and cheaper to hire teachers abroad than to solve the systemic problems in urban schools” (Dunn, 2011, p. 1401). She recommends further empirical research in different places, “such as Filipino groups in Baltimore and Louisiana,” and ideally including some of their students as well (Dunn, 2011, pp. 1402-3). Only one student was mentioned by Dunn in the *Urban Education* article she published based on her dissertation research, a girl who

walked over to her during a classroom observation and said, “It’s hard to learn in here” (Dunn, 2011, p. 1399). Presumably greater attention to such student voices could offer essential insights into these natural experiments now being conducted on an ever increasing scale for the purported benefit of students.

School districts, with tax bases ever diminishing by the delocalization of jobs of all kinds, are turning to this relatively low cost solution. Since no test of the labor market is required (or at least not enforced) before employers apply for and gain H1-B visas for recruiting overseas teachers or other kinds of labor (North, 2011; U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2011), it provides no protection for qualified workers already residing in the United States. There is no requirement for school districts to document that they made a good faith effort to recruit and retain American citizens or permanent residents with adequate teaching qualifications before resorting to the often more pliant overseas hires, a neoliberal convenience for employers seeking to hire the most qualified teachers willing to accept the most modest compensation (by American standards) with the least fuss. This suggests that the Department of Labor visa policies in this matter favor the interests of employers over the interests of labor, a neoliberal trend. It is also possible, however, that the policies leave room for interpretation, as when the D.O.L. H-1B regulations stipulate that the employer must attest having tried to “[recruit] U.S. workers and [hire] U.S. workers applicant(s) who are equally or better qualified than the H-1B non-immigrants” (Department of Labor, 2011). U.S. organized labor, including the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, could make a case of this in defense of the thousands of U.S. teachers laid off from their jobs in Los Angeles, for example, while thousands with the same credentials were recruited for lower pay from overseas. To be more precise, labor leaders could use this particular legal language to argue that many if not most of the overseas recruited

teachers are in the United States illegally, because there were already thousands of teachers already in America who were “equally or better qualified” at the time when the overseas teachers were brought in. Labor leaders have yet to make such a case, however, so far as I know, suggesting that knowledge labor organizations, too, in some ways support or at least acquiesce to this particular neoliberal educational trend. The NEA has cited the ongoing difficulties with teacher retention as contributing significantly to the trend,⁷ and their ongoing calls for greater system-wide attention to these matters comprises a challenge of sorts to short-term solutions to teacher shortages.

Emergent Resistance

The NEA and the AFT have also issued statements against the deliberate exploitation of the international recruits, and some educators appear to be organizing challenges specifically against this kind of exploitation, as indicated by an array of news stories featuring overseas recruited teachers and others who have brought successful lawsuits against recruiting agencies and public school hiring authorities (Mathews, 2009; Sack, 2001; Silvera, 2011). For example, more than 350 Louisiana teachers recruited from the Philippines recently brought a class action lawsuit against recruiters, employers, and legal counsel representing recruiters and employers, claiming that they had been illegally trafficked and defrauded, charged well over ten thousand dollars each for their job placements, and “deceived into selling property, resigning from jobs, borrowing money and leaving behind children and friends in search of a more secure future” (<http://la.aft.org/idx.cfm?action=article>). This case is now making its way through the courts, and it will be interesting to see how higher courts in particular interpret the U.S. legal rights of

⁷ NEA recruitment and retention data is available at <http://www.nea.org/tools/16977.htm>

these overseas recruited teachers. In late March, 2011, for another example and one most germane to this study, hundreds of New York City public school teachers recruited from Jamaica, the Bahamas, Trinidad, Grenada, St. Lucia and the Dominican Islands organized public protests to demand the fulfillment of a range of promises made by New York public school hiring authorities, including the conferral of permanent residency and adequate visa and other support to allow them to bring their families to live with them (Silvera, 2011). Notably, some of these teachers aver that, “European teachers are not given the same treatment” (Silvera, 2011) a serious racist allegation which calls for further investigation.

A Limited Discussion of “the Caribbean” and “Caribbean Immigration”

It can be awkward to speak of “the Caribbean” as of a monolith or as of a culturally and politically homogenous region, because it is no such thing and it does not fit into any such simplistic category. Rather, geographically the Caribbean is an ancient archipelago comprised of upwards of 7,000 islands and other very small land formations sprawling east by southeast from the Gulf of Mexico to just north of Venezuela on the northern edge of South America. Some countries on the continent of South America, such as Guyana; or on the isthmus between North and South America, such as Belize and Nicaragua, are also considered part of “the Caribbean,” as they face the Caribbean Sea. Scholars of “the Caribbean” customarily acknowledge this complexity when describing this historically significant geographic designation:

The modern Caribbean states represent a unique and challenging experience in the history of mankind. Situated on the sparsely populated periphery of an irregularly populated continent in 1492, the region rapidly became the dramatic proscenium of the European invasion and domination of the Americas . . . Its historical trajectory permanently impressed by the twin experiences of colonialism and slavery, the Caribbean has produced an unusual collection of societies with a population *mélange* that is different from any other region in the world . . . It is, in many respects, a society of striking contrasts. (Knight and Palmer, 1979, pp. 1-2)

The largest Caribbean island is Cuba, an independent, communist, Hispanic nation that has been under a wide ranging United States embargo since 1960, when the government nationalized the holdings of some United States citizens. The second largest Caribbean island is the first one claimed by Christopher Columbus for Spain in 1492, Hispaniola, which is comprised of the Francophone Republic of Haiti to the west and the Hispanic Dominican Republic on the eastern two thirds of the island. Jamaica and Puerto Rico are also larger islands, and other Caribbean island nations include Anguila; Antigua and Barbuda; Aruba; Bahamas; Barbados; Bonaire; British Virgin Islands; Cayman Islands; Curacao; Dominica; Grenada; Guadeloupe; Martinique; Montserrat; Saba; Saint Barthelmy; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Martin; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Sint Eustatius; Sint Maartin; Trinidad and Tobago; Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands. Reflective of the complicated colonial history of the region, many languages are spoken throughout the Caribbean, and the islands retain linguistic, cultural, and sometimes even political ties to the European countries that colonized them. For example, Spanish is the main language of Puerto Rico because it is a former Spanish colony, but it is now a commonwealth of the United States. English is the official language of the United States Virgin Islands, a territory of the United States and a former Danish colony. French is the language of Martinique, an overseas department of France. The Francophone island of St. Martin includes two nations, Saint-Martin, a French overseas collectivity, and Sint Maarten, which is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Since colonial times, European influences have been creolized with both indigenous island and African slave populations to create a complex regional diversity belied by the geographic descriptor “Caribbean.” By the time “the slave trade ended in the nineteenth century, the Caribbean had taken approximately 47 percent of the 10 million or so African slaves brought to the Americas”

(Knight and Palmer, 1989, p. 7). Asian immigrants further complicated the regional mix from at least the beginning of the nineteenth century. For example, Chinese immigrants brought to Trinidad to do field labor in 1806 instead established themselves as traders there (Higman, 2011, p. 162; Knight and Palmer, 1979, p. 2); and 40,000 Indians came to Trinidad in 1870 to work on sugar plantations (Higman, 2011, p 164). Trinidadians of Asian Indian ancestry comprise the largest ethnic group on that island at just over 40%, just a little larger than the next largest ethnic group there, African Trinidadians, at just under 40% (Government of Trinidad and Tobago, 2012; Hookumchand & Seenarine, 2000; CIA World Factbook, 2012; Higman, 2011, p. 2; Hillman & D'Agostino, 2009; Knight and Palmer, 1989). With so many linguistic, cultural, political, historical and other influences on the 40,000,000 or so inhabitants of the land formations above the Caribbean plate (UN Population Information Network, 2012), any reference to "Caribbean" people, or to "the Caribbean," must always give pause for thought. Nevertheless, I speak of "the Caribbean," largely because this is a term which has been frequently employed by New York City's Caribbean teachers themselves in their recent efforts to publicize their particular concerns about their immigration status and about recruitment promises made to them (Black Institute, 2010; Silvera, 2011). In addition, according to Bryce-Laporte, "A Pan-Caribbean spirit is emerging in New York City, to some extent in Washington, D.C., and in many other Eastern seaboard cities" (1979, p. 228). The continuing widespread use of the term Caribbean to refer to this diverse geopolitical region and its inhabitants further justifies the use of this word.

According to United Nations Population Division, the Caribbean region has one of the highest net migration rates in the world, and over the last half century the region has lost about

five million of its population of 37 million through migration (Gonzalez, 2012, p. 47; Jules, 2008, p. 204).

The Hart-Cellar Immigration Reform Act of 1965, which abolished the racist national-origin quota system, has literally changed the face of immigration to the United States of America . . . [and] Afro-Caribbean nationals . . . account for more than two thirds of the Black immigrants who have arrived in the U.S. since 1965. (Gibson & Jung, 2006 as cited in Tillery & Chresfield, 2012, p. 546)

The trend for Caribbeans to immigrate to America's East Coast is well established, with six out of ten of the 1.5 million American residents claiming Afro-Caribbean ancestry concentrated in the New York, Miami, and Ft. Lauderdale metropolitan regions (Logan, 2007, p. 49). Afro-Caribbeans as a percentage of the total black population of New York, New York went from about one in five in 1990 to just over one in four in 2000 (Logan, 2007, p. 53). These migration trends may be fruitfully located within larger neoliberal trends towards globalization, "triggered by what Giddens (1990) and Harvey (1989) identify as more flexible modes of capital accumulation by reconfigurations of spatial and temporal conditions of production due to information technologies" (Gonzalez, 2012, p. 472; Harvey, 1989, p. 109).

New York City's Caribbean teachers have begun to receive at least some scholarly attention, as evidenced by at least one dissertation published on ProQuest (Beck, 2010). Beck's dissertation, entitled *Afro-Caribbean Women Teachers Recruited for U.S. Urban Schools: A Narrative Analysis of Experience, Change, and Perception*, featured and discussed her interviews with four female Barbadian teachers recruited to teach in an urban Kentucky setting. Beck interprets their experiences from a womanist theoretical perspective, emphasizing the value of their testimony for better understanding how to improve the recruitment experience for teachers and how to ameliorate the deteriorating discipline situation in American public schools. I did not find any other dissertations dealing directly with Caribbean teachers in the United

States, but Paul Washington-Miller has investigated the experiences of Caribbean educators in England (2009). In his article, “Reconstructing teacher identities: Shock, turbulence, resistance and adaptation in Caribbean teacher migration to England,” he discusses the culture shock reported by Caribbean teachers recruited to teach in that country. Washington-Miller (who evidently also publishes under the name Paul Miller) argues that in order for such recruitment to be successful for all the stakeholders, internationally recruited teachers need comprehensive orientation and ongoing professional support as they adapt to a new country and a new educational setting (Miller, 2008, p. 280).

Other Caribbean or Caribbean-affiliated scholars have also attended to some of the special concerns of Caribbean educators in American schools. For example, Florida teacher educator and scholar Angela Rhone has written about the experience of Caribbean teachers in training in her state (2012). Rhone noted that she immigrated from Jamaica herself when she was a child, and writing about special challenges Caribbean immigrant educators face when they choose to pursue teaching in the United States, Rhone has provided a thumbnail sketch of “[a] typical [K-12] Caribbean immigrant educator”: (a) Most have several years of teaching experience in the country of origin. (b) Most have earned either a 3-year teaching certificate or a 4-year teacher education diploma. (c) Most are female. (d) “[M]ost Caribbean educators have developed a global awareness in keeping with their nations' goals for survival” (p. 44). (e) Many “lack knowledge of the complex nature of America's culture” (p. 44). Rhone notes that these teachers are more oriented towards their national (e.g. “Jamaican”) rather than racial (e.g. “black”) status, a difference that sometimes puts them in conflict with African American teachers and students who self-identify as black (p. 45); but she nevertheless endorses their suitability for American classrooms: “Having lived in multiethnic and multicultural worlds, these immigrants

are well-equipped to deal with the diverse and complex issues in U.S. society” (p. 47). She also notes that many of the Caribbean educators she has worked with have told her they never would have undertaken the often arduous route to Florida state certification had they understood the difficulties of American classrooms in advance (p. 47), a luxury never afforded to the 2001 and 2003 New York City cohorts.

In addition to these scholarly works, there are at least three recent books dealing with Caribbean immigration and the relationship between the Caribbean and the United States since the time of the Second World War. *In Moving Beyond Borders: A History of Black Canadian and Caribbean Women in the Diaspora* (2011), Karen Flynn, currently an assistant professor here at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, uses oral histories to interrogate the agency of Caribbean knowledge laborers who immigrated to Canada in the last half of the twentieth century. Flynn’s emphasis on the way childhood experiences shaped the nurses responses and capacities to respond to their career immigrant challenges, analyzed from diverse theoretical perspectives including postcolonial, diasporic Black studies, feminism, and labor and nursing history, will influence this study. In particular, Flynn (2011) argues that “Black women’s multiple subjectivities and identities were first forged within the context of childhood—in the family, church, and school—then shaped and reshaped by various transitions such as migration, professional training, and their roles as wives, mothers, single women, and community activists (p. 4). This insight dovetails with the research methods developed and advanced by both Bertaux and Thompson (1997) and Dash (1996), and it substantively informs the approach I plan to take in my interviewing protocol. *In Caliban and the Yankees: Trinidad and the United States Occupation*, Harvey R. Neptune (2007) examines relations between the United States and Trinidad and Tobago during the Second World War, when the United States effectively

“occupied” Trinidad, building bases and stationing thousands of soldiers and fighting crafts there. Neptune observed that “[t]hese years, it should be appreciated, produced a manner of framing arguments about culture and nationhood that anticipated the challenges of the postcolonial present” (p. 157). The migration of hundreds of Caribbean teachers to New York City’s public schools is clearly situated within that postcolonial present, so I plan to draw on Neptune’s observations about subject identity construction under a quasi-colonial regime. Flynn, Neptune, Rhone, Shaw-Taylor and Tuch, and other more recent scholars of the Caribbean American experience could in part have been responding to Bryce-Laporte’s 1979 exhortation to focus greater attention on the unique experiences of Caribbean immigrants:

[O]bjectively visible as they are, Caribbean immigrants suffer multiple levels of Ellisonian-like invisibility. Part of the special invisibility of Caribbean immigrants (and immigration) in the United States is, of course, reflected and perhaps caused by the dearth of studies or course materials on it as a subject . . . We, as social scientists, must complement our objective concerns with the structure and context by conducting empirical fieldwork and in-depth probing of new Caribbean immigrants not only as a category or condition but as persons and groups who behave, react, and act upon their settings; who bring and develop meanings for their settings; and whom [sic] therefore, must be studied and listened to as such. (Bryce-Laporte, 1979, 229-230)

This case study of New York City’s Caribbean teachers hearkens to this call, seeking to learn more about their unique immigration experience and their agency within it. Objective concerns about flexible teacher labor in tandem with transgenerational class projects will be complemented and interrogated with empirical fieldwork soliciting the participation of the teachers themselves, as both subjects and agents.

Key readings in Caribbean sociology and Caribbean feminism (Barriteau, 2003; Barrow & Reddock, 2001; Bose & Kim, 2009; Downes, 2003; Downes, 2004; Leo-Rynne, 1999; Lewis, 2003; Marshall, 1972; Miller, 2004; Mohammed, 2004; Reddock, 1994; Reddock, 2009; Scher, 2010; Thomas-Hope, 2009) explore the construction of gender roles in the Caribbean. Theories

of male marginalization (Barriteau, 2003; Bose & Kim, 2009; Miller, 2004; Downes, 2003; Downes, 2004, Mohammed, 2004), and men's and women's gendered roles in work and in the family (Barriteau, 2003; Barrow, 2001; Hodges, 2002; Wilson, 2001) proved of particular relevance to this project. In my discussions of gender, I reference Barriteau's definition of it: "I define gender to mean complex systems of personal and social relations through which women and men are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to, or are allocated, status, power and material references within society (Barriteau, 1994, p. 26 as cited by herself, 2003, p. 27).

In his influential 1994 book, *Marginalization of the Black Male: Insights from the development of the teaching profession*, Errol Miller contends that the main reason Jamaican education authorities decided to equalize male and female teacher pay much earlier than Barbados and some other Anglophone Caribbean countries did "was to eliminate the political threat of Jamaica's male teachers by reducing their numbers." Miller argues that the larger strategy was to deliberately occupy black men in agriculture and industry, not in education, because there they would have greater potential to "overthrow the power structure; to loosen the hold of the church on the education system and to limit the upward mobility of black men in the society. In a real sense, the black woman was used against the black man" (Miller, 1994 as cited in Downes, 2003, p. 315). In other words, Miller argues that the numerical feminization of teaching was a deliberate strategy of male marginalization.

Downes counters that Miller "negates the agency of Caribbean women and excludes them from the terrain of resistance" (p. 316), adding that even when women outnumbered men in the Jamaican education service, men still retained more "dominance and privilege." (pp. 318-319). Downes also notes that,

Although a 1944 royal commission report acknowledged that women were often the de facto breadwinners for their households, the concept of the male breadwinner persisted and the government did not accept the principle of equal pay for male and female teachers until 1961. In practice, unequal pay persisted for several years beyond that. (p. 315)

Barritteau further critiques Miller's male marginalization thesis in what she calls a "requiem," or celebration of its death (2003). Like Downes, she emphasizes that contrary to Miller's theory, men remain in dominant leadership roles throughout Caribbean educational institutions (Barritteau, 2003, p. 324). She argues that Miller's thesis is more political than epistemological, and that it "does not advance our understanding of what is ontologically different in the lives of Caribbean men" (p. 325). Mohammed's critique of Miller's thesis dovetails with Barritteau's, and Mohammed argues that "[s]ome of the present male discourse on patriarchy and masculinity appears to do little more than reinscribe the old order rather than creating a more equitable one" (Mohammed, 2004, p. 64). She goes on to recommend that "the feminist project may depend on the creation of new essentialist ideas of human nature, undifferentiated by sex, but celebratory of difference" (Mohammed, 2004, p. 64).

Wilson (2001), referencing the term macho as it is understood in the Puerto Rican context, asserts that "[v]irility or masculinity is the most highly valued quality that a man can possess" (p. 339) in the Caribbean cultural context. He explains that this is often understood to be made visible "by their sexual activities and their fathering of children" (Wilson, 2001, p. 339). Wilson (2001) also references examples of what is understood as proof of masculinity in other Caribbean countries, including Jamaica and Guyana, where fathering a child is considered the ultimate proof of manhood (p. 340), and he notes that premarital sex is considered an important proof of manhood in the Bahamas, Martinique, Haiti, and elsewhere in the Caribbean; although female virginity is equally highly prized in these places (p. 340). Wilson (2001) goes on to

discuss the special importance placed upon the relationship between a Caribbean male and his mother, noting that one of the gravest ways to insult a Caribbean man is to speak disrespectfully of his mother (p. 340).

Barrow (2001) also addresses Caribbean family relationships, by surveying the history of Caribbean family studies from colonial times to the present (pp. 418-425). She explains that during the colonial period, in particular the 1940s, English colonial social-welfare workers misconstrued the diverse Caribbean family formations they encountered as somehow pathological, because they often did not conform to their “own middle class, Christian, nuclear-family standards” (Barrow, 2001, p. 419). Evidently disturbed to observe unmarried partners cohabiting and children being raised by extended and often loose kinship networks rather than by their own married, monogamous parents, Barrow notes that these English social-welfare workers “interpreted their mandate to be the reconstruction of Caribbean families to conform to the nuclear ideal” (Barrow, 2001, p. 419). She observes that “matrifocality” and “male marginality” were two concepts that emerged in subsequent efforts to understand Caribbean family structures (p. 423). The latter concept was discussed just above. The former, “matrifocality,” is described by Barrow (2001) as a “term . . . adopted to define this fundamental principle of Afro-Caribbean family structure” (p. 423). Referencing the writings of Smith (1973), Barrow (2010) goes on to emphasize that that writer, who coined the term “matrifocality” in the scholarly literature, emphasized that it “refers to mother-centeredness, not to female dominance or headship” (p. 423). She explained that this matrifocality tended to increase over the family’s life cycle, with the young, childbearing mother in a weaker, more economically dependent position, and the older mother becoming “the center of an economic and decision-making coalition with her [adult] children” (Smith, 1972, p. 125 as cited in Barrow, 2001, p 423).

Merle Hodge, most famous for her 1970 novel *Crick Crack, Monkey*, is also a scholar of Caribbean feminism and sociology currently working as a professor in the department of Women and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. Her essay, “We Kind of Family” (Hodge, 2002, pp. 474-485) provides essential context for a consideration of Caribbean women’s work (p. 474) and Caribbean family structures (p. 475). Hodge explained that most modern Caribbeans are descended from ancestors who were brought to the region from either Africa or India to work as either slaves or indentured laborers, and whose descendants subsequently worked as

small farmers, cane cutters, domestic workers, market vendors, seamstresses, washers and ironers, inter-island traders, childminders, sellers of food at the roadside . . . [and later, as they were better able to access education] as schoolteachers, telephone operators, nurses, clerks and so forth. There was never a time in Caribbean society when women did not go out to work. (Hodge, 2002, p. 474)

Hodge (2002) also described Caribbean family structure, noting that Afro-Caribbean women “have always been a little skeptical about the benefits of legal marriage . . . despite centuries of pressure from various religious agencies” (p. 475). Finally, she questions the usefulness or applicability of the term ‘single-parent’ in the Caribbean context, when an examination of “actual family systems” obtaining in the Caribbean today reveals that most Caribbean children are actually raised by more than one person, in fact by several family members, whether or not their parents are married to one another (p. 475). Finally, Hodge offers the following definition of the Caribbean family: “In the Caribbean, traditionally, a family has meant a network of people, not just two parents and their children” (p. 475). All of these insights from Caribbean sociology and Caribbean feminism should be brought to bear in this case study of a group of Caribbean teachers and their families, and in particular in the consideration of the gendered constructions that emerge through their testimonies.

New York City's Caribbean Teachers

The Black Institute is an activist think tank, or what they call an “action-tank,” based in New York City and dedicated to “[shaping] intellectual discourse and dialogue and [impacting] public policy uniquely from a Black perspective (a perspective which includes all people of color in the United States and throughout the Diaspora)” (The Black Institute, 2010, p. 2). The Association of International Educators (AIE) is an affiliate organization of The Black Institute composed of New York City's Caribbean teachers. The Black Institute has been working closely with AIE since at least 2010 to call attention to the special concerns of international teachers recruited from countries throughout the Caribbean to work in New York City's public schools. That same year, The Black Institute (2010) published a black paper (which is like a white paper, but from a “uniquely Black perspective”) entitled *Broken Promises: The Story of Caribbean International Teachers in New York City's Public Schools*. This brief (16 pages plus references and appendices) report includes personal explanations from a few teachers along with a general explanation of the city's recruitment rationale and protocols. *Broken Promises* also features a discussion of the teachers' currently most pressing immigration issues, including the lack of permanent residency for many, mounting legal fees and concerns for those trying to keep themselves and their family members in legal status, abusive behaviors by principals who take advantage of the immigrant teachers' special vulnerable status, and perhaps most poignantly of all, the special family problems that participation in this mass recruitment has caused for many of these teachers. One teacher was quoted as saying, “Truthfully, there was nothing holding us here but for families with children, the promises of unlimited educational opportunities became a priority. It was hard to uproot our families for a second time” (The Black Institute, 2010, p. 6).

The paper emphasizes that this recruitment experience has been devastating for many families, and that domestic violence has sometimes resulted, “often a result of a perceived emasculation of the male spouses, who remain in this country unable to work” (p. 10). The paper also stresses the need for more data about Caribbean teacher recruitment, and this planned study intends to gather at least some of the needed data, in part by using surveys to gather some basic demographic data about teachers, including their countries of origin, ages, genders, levels of education and certifications.

The Black Institute published a second, related black paper the following year, in 2011. It was entitled *Dream Deferred: Black, Invisible & Documented: The Plight of Caribbean Immigrant Youth*, and it was prepared by The Black Institute on behalf of The International Youth Association (IYA), a project of The Black Institute. This paper notes that the Broken Promises campaign had already as of the publication of this second black paper met with several successes on behalf of New York City’s Caribbean teachers, including a diminishment of the power of principals over teachers’ visas, better protection from the threat of layoffs during the summer of 2011, agreements of support from the Department of Education, and the mayor’s office, and the establishment of a working relationship with these latter authorities (The Black Institute, 2011, p. 5). Despite these early successes, however, the impetus for this second paper was to call attention to the special problems faced by the adult children of the recruited teachers. In particular, this paper explains the problem of “aging out,” whereby youths who entered the country legally with their recruited teacher parents eventually turn 21 without their parents having obtained permanent residency (a.k.a. “green card”) status (The Black Institute, 2011, p. 5). This puts these young adults in the awkward situation of having entered the country legally, but now having been stripped of legal status and therefore now in the United States illegally. Put

otherwise, they are illegal aliens who arrived legally and with every intention of remaining legal. A special irony of their situation may be that their future prospects, especially their educational and citizenship prospects, may have been a prime motivator in their recruited teacher parents' decisions to bring them to the United States in the first place. This renders their current disadvantages and vulnerabilities most unfair and almost wholly unanticipated by their mothers and fathers, as this study's attention to transgenerational class projects reveals.

Gendered Transgenerational Class Projects

The two black papers produced by The Black Institute on New York City's Caribbean teachers and their adult children (2010 and 2011) suggest the importance of family projects within this recruitment scenario, and highlight both gendered and generational pressures that call for closer scrutiny. These papers also hint that these subjects have found themselves classified contrary to their intentions and plans; and that these unbidden classifications, undertaken on behalf of better educational prospects for thousands of American children, have been egregious for these teachers and their children. According to the British feminist historian Sheila Rowbotham:

Marx's thinking about history and his understanding of the significance of class conflict as a crucial factor in historical transformation have exerted a continuing influence on all people who have pitted their humiliation in the world as it is against their hope of the world as it could be. (1999, pp. 26-27)

The humiliations inflicted upon New York City's Caribbean teachers, from lack of professional visa status to inadequate housing and other basic deprivations, may be understood in such a tension, as they pit their protest against perceived injustices against hope those injustices may be redressed. This wished for world is one where these teachers' personal sacrifices in forsaking their homeland to immigrate, as well as their professional contributions in teaching for

more than a decade in some of the city's hardest to staff schools and positions, may be rewarded with citizenship rights in support of their human rights. It is important to understand the role class has played and continues to play in the plight of this group of teachers. Elucidating a schema of class for these teachers, answering questions about their class backgrounds and current class identifications as well as their class aspirations for themselves and their children, questions about their class mobility as well as personal mobility, could help to clarify the motivations of the teachers and possibly also other actors in this extraordinary international scheme to alleviate particular local teacher shortages. A focus on class could also serve to interrogate Susan Robertson's arguments, clearly in conversation with David Harvey's brief history of neoliberalism:

[T]he mobilization of neoliberal ideas for reorganizing societies and social relations, including the key institutions involved in social reproduction, is a class project of capitalism with three key aims: (1) the redistribution of wealth upward to the ruling elites through new structures of governance, (2) the transformation of education systems so that the production of workers for the economy is the primary mandate, and (3) the breaking down of education as a public sector monopoly, opening it up to strategic investment by for-profit firms. (Robertson, 2008, p. 12)

Robertson (2008) further argues that teacher unions and other institutionalized interests in education must be dismantled and the notion of education as a public good must be silenced before these three neoliberal aims can be achieved (p. 12). A schema of class for New York City's Caribbean teachers may be examined in juxtaposition to Robertson's tripartate argument, attending especially to (a) the nature of wealth distribution or redistribution occurring or not occurring, (b) the commitment evidenced by the school district authorities to advance education as a public good and as a social contract between the state and civil society, or not; and the related and potentially converse determination to produce workers for the economy, and (c) the shift of the responsibility and ownership of public education from the public to the private sector.

The closely related significance of visa classifications and interstate treaties must also be interrogated for a broader understanding of the schema of class in which these teachers find themselves, as must the initial first contracts these teachers signed.

The History of Neoliberalism and its Ethical Rationale

According to Rizvi and Lingard, it is no longer possible to consider educational or other policies from a strictly national perspective, as in this globalized era they must be considered from the perspective of “[g]lobalization [which] represents a range of loosely connected ideas designed to describe new forms of political-economic governance based on the extension of market relationships globally” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 31). These authors emphasize that the notion of globalization is highly contested, and that it is not only about market relationships, but also about political and cultural shifts wrought by technological advances (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, pp. 22-23). Focusing on international teachers provides a test case for these theories, including insights into their use of technology and globalization to make cultural shifts and to attempts to leverage or influence political shifts to their advantage. Arnot notes that “globalisation . . . challenges existing social classifications and stratifications whilst generating new ones,” while reconfiguring the boundaries of macro and micro, global and local, and time and space (Arnot, 2009, p. 224). Globalization is thus understood as more than an economic phenomenon, but it is also widely recognized that free market fundamentalism, a.k.a. neoliberalism, has been a key feature of it (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 24; Stiglitz, 2008). Stiglitz has defined neoliberalism as “that grab-bag of ideas based on the fundamentalist notion that markets are self-correcting, allocate resources efficiently, and serve the public interest well” (Stiglitz, 2008). The symbiosis between globalization and neoliberalization is revealed in these

definitions, showing that the seemingly more economic phenomenon of neoliberalization is not strictly economic, but is rather a system for managing economic and other aspects of globalization. This all encompassing, all commodifying vision of neoliberalism, then, may be understood as lying at the heart of globalization, a system of political and cultural as well as economic shifts facilitated by technological advances; especially once it is understood why and how all of these categories—political, cultural, and economic—are essential to the neoliberal agenda. Peters and Harvey, and to a lesser extent Rizvi and Lingard, have stressed the importance of understanding the antecedents of neoliberalism before critiquing it, and Peters and Harvey both rely heavily on Foucault as they trace the birth of neoliberalism, which is intimately linked with what Foucault calls “the birth of biopower” (Harvey, 2011; Peters, 2011; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), which could be thought of as a way of managing or engaging with globalization. State bureaucracies, the traditional administrative mechanisms under the Westphalian model, have been replaced by “polycentric arrangements involving both public and private rules and their hierarchical impositions . . . [with the state seeking] the production of self-regulating individuals” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 117. All of these authors label this new method for the management of individuals and systems in a global context, “neoliberalism.”

According to David Harvey’s *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2011), neoliberalization can be understood basically two ways, “either as a utopian project to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites” (p. 19). The former idea sounds more neutral with the potential for high ideals, while the latter sounds somewhat sinister, something like a deliberate conspiracy on the part of an elite few to defraud and disempower almost everyone else. This extraordinary assertion is easy to support with broad

analyses and general statistics, but much harder to trace to identifiable responsible parties. Peters does not disagree with Harvey, however, when he writes, “[W]ithin the zero-sum context in which the competitive market choice is structured, the ‘freedom’ of few is premised on the ‘non-freedom’ of many” (Harvey, 2011, p. 114). Nevertheless, Harvey (2011) compellingly argues that the latter scenario has prevailed, with global elites using policies of neoliberalization to reestablish or, as in the cases of Russia and China, establish the systematic domination of financial advantage by the elite few (p. 19). Harvey further argues that utopian neoliberal ideals are regularly used to justify or legitimize actions desired for more political than utopian purposes, and that it is therefore important to attend closely to the distinction between neoliberal ideas and neoliberal practices. The former are often well-aligned with the highest principles, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁸ or Martha Nussbaum’s Ten Central Capabilities,⁹ an ironic coincidence in need of further analysis. However, neoliberal practices—as opposed to ideals or utopian theories - are less perfectly aligned with such high ideals in the service of all people; but are often rather more expediently and politically aligned with the objectives not of all or most people, but only a very elite moneyed and empowered few, as Harvey has said. Close attention to this distinction between neoliberalism in theory and neoliberalism in practice is important when analyzing educational policies in general, and it is especially important when interpreting the effects of neoliberalization on educational policy in a global context. Harvey traces the rise of neoliberal theory back to the Mont Pelerin Society, a group of political philosophers who first met in 1947 at a Swiss spa by that name (2011, p. 19-

⁸ Passed by the United Nations December 10, 1948, the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be viewed at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>.

⁹ Nussbaum’s Ten Central Capabilities are in brief: 1. Life 2. Bodily health 3. Bodily integrity 4. Senses, imagination, and thought 5. Emotions 6. Practical reason 7. Affiliation 8. Other species 9. Play and 10. Control over one’s environment (Nussbaum, 2011).

20). Led by Austrian Friedrich von Hayek, the group included Ludvig von Mises, Milton Friedman, and even Karl Popper (Harvey, 2011, p. 20). In a series of lectures given in 1978-79 and published under the title *The Birth of Biopolitics*, Michel Foucault (2008) also traces the rise of neoliberal theory back to the Mont Pelerin Society, which he identifies as a response to the rise of Nazism and fascism, which he in turn identifies as a response to concerns about eighteenth century liberalism and liberal politics (pp. 102, 108). One key concern emphasized by Foucault and oft repeated by Harvey and others is the tension between “Keynesian-style interventionism . . . which proposes a number of state interventions on the general balances of the economy” (Foucault, 2008, p. 108) and the ideal of less state intervention, particularly in markets, which is also called neoliberalism.¹⁰ As Rizvi and Lingard have explained:

“While neoliberalism accepts that some redistribution and control may be necessary, it suggests that the Keynesian welfare state exceeded its democratic authority and is no longer relevant to contemporary economic and social life, especially under the cultural conditions of globalization. Of course, the global financial crisis of 2008 has once again opened public and political discussions about these claims. (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 88)

Foucault notes that what he calls “neo-liberalism” is not just planning or allowing free markets to function, but rather “the overall exercise of political power . . . modeled on the principles of a market economy” (2008, p. 131). Foucault (2008) explains that this becomes “a general art of government” (p. 131), which he also calls “governmentality” (pp. 121, 186, 191), and so neoliberalism is a rejection of planned economies, but not of state intervention. Foucault and Harvey are in agreement, then, that the neoliberal strategy is not necessarily the deregulation of markets, but rather the regulation of everything (including markets) in the service of markets.

¹⁰ Writing in the 1920s, British economist John Maynard Keynes argued that it is the government’s duty to spend money when others cannot, and to relieve the plight of the unemployed by spending to increase aggregate demand for goods and services (Wapshot, 2011). Keynesian-style interventionism, then, means more state intervention, particularly in relief of unemployment.

This conclusion is further supported by Peters' (2011) reading of Hayek in *Neoliberalism and After?* where he quotes the jacket notes of Hayek's most famous book, *The Road to Serfdom*, first published by the University of Chicago press in 1944:

The economic freedom which is the prerequisite of any other freedom cannot be the freedom from the economic care which the socialists promise us and which can be obtained only by relieving the individual at the same time of the necessity and of the power of choice: it must be the freedom of economic activity which, with the right of choice, inevitably also carries the risk and responsibility of that right. (Hayek, as cited in Peters, 2011, p. 17)

This Hayekian insistence that “economic freedom . . . is the prerequisite of any other freedom” establishes the ethical and logical rationale for both utopian and political iterations of neoliberalism. Peters writes that “Hayek argued that all forms of collectivism tend towards tyranny destroying individual economic and personal freedom,” and chapter titles in *The Road to Serfdom*, like the title of the book itself, reflect Hayek's profound ethical concerns: “The Socialist Roots of Nazism” and “The Totalitarians in Our Midst” (Peters, 2011, p. 17). For Hayek, then, Keynesianism or socialism was the road to Nazism and even serfdom, while neoliberalism was the road to a free society. Hayek and his Mont Pelerin colleagues were working during and at the end of World War II, with the adverse consequences of Nazism and totalitarianism readily apparent, and it is important to bear in mind this historical context when trying to understand the rationale for neoliberalism. Considering economic freedom the prerequisite of all other freedoms, the neoliberal objective is to stabilize inflation, but not to maintain full employment, purchasing power, or balanced budgets; and they believed “it may be that a reserve army of unemployment is absolutely necessary for the economy” (Foucault, 2008, p. 139). In order to uphold markets, upon which all of the rest of society depends according to the neoliberal schema, “the Rule of law . . . [must] formalize the action of government as a provider of rules for an economic game in which the only players, the only real agents, must be

individuals, or let's say, if you like, enterprises" (Foucault, 2008, p. 173). Foucault has further elaborated that according to Adam Smith's famous "invisible hand" concept from Book IV of *The Wealth of Nations*, "The collective good must not be an objective . . . Invisibility is absolutely indispensable. It is an invisibility which means that no economic agent should or can pursue the collective good" (2008, pp. 279-80). According to this logic, a neoliberal logic, Keynesian-style intervention purporting to be for the sake of the collective good is in fact harmful to the collective good, hampering the optimal functioning of the invisible hand, and of markets.

Neoliberal Influences in Educational Policy

I shall now consider four neoliberal educational policy trends identified in both the work of Rizvi and Lingard, and Peters, as well as other theorists. This list is not at all exhaustive, and the categories overlap considerably, but it provides a way to begin thinking about both strengths and weaknesses of these policies, and strengths and weaknesses of major critiques of these policies. These four neoliberal educational policy trends are: (a) The creation of education markets, (b) The individualization of the educational transaction, (c) The reification of human capital theory and the related abandonment or extreme devaluation of anything nonquantifiable, and (d) Overreliance on testing systems.

The creation of education markets. Foucault's and Harvey's perspectives on neoliberalization and governmentality shed light on recent and current educational policies in global contexts. Educational policies and initiatives can be evaluated using the idea that the current neoliberal paradigm it is not about deregulation, but rather about regulation in the service of markets. In the neoliberal paradigm, "[I]f markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by

state action if necessary” (Harvey, 2011, p. 2). Accordingly, in the neoliberal paradigm, if education markets do not exist, then they must be created, and examples of these created markets can be seen in the proliferation of charter schools and in the burgeoning of the standardized testing industry. Under Margaret Thatcher and John Major in England, conservative and neoliberal education reforms extended to “not only the curriculum and assessment, but also the control and financing of education, the allocation of pupils to schools and the diversity of school types” (Arnot et al., 1999, p. 5). The “reserve army of unemployment”—which Foucault has suggested may be necessary to uphold the overriding neoliberal objectives of stabilizing inflation and maximizing opportunities for enterprises—looms ever before anxious parents who dread the idea that their offspring might languish in unemployment and other kinds of economic unproductivity or marginalization, rather than flourishing in the prosperity of markets that are ever leaner and ever more profitable for the fortunate few. Educators and parents alike want to prepare their students to succeed on the winning side of this equation, as highly flexible, highly employable global citizens well able to exploit markets rather than be exploited by them. Successful fee-paying schools or charter schools hoping to be chosen by parents as consumers must first persuade parents that they can coach students to ever greater heights of global success and even domination. Those teachers who aspire to teach in these “more successful” schools must also cultivate and manifest extraordinary flexibility in order to maneuver their way out of a growing reserve army of unemployed, highly qualified teachers, all while demonstrating their high degree of preparedness to prepare students to compete in these extremely competitive globalizing circumstances. Responding to neoliberal logic, a logic that places everything at the service of enterprise, education authorities in government, school operators, administrators, students, and teachers alike must assume enterprising roles in order to serve and participate in

markets, arguably the only game left in the neoliberal paradigm. Peters has criticized these “increasingly consumer-driven” tendencies which are “seriously eroding the notion of education as a welfare right”:

The end-point of a pure neoliberal approach to education policy is a fully consumer-driven model, where social or state welfare functions disappear completely. In contrast to a neoliberal model of educational policy it can be argued that today there is even more reason to regard education as a form of welfare; indeed, in a postindustrial society or in the emerging global knowledge economy, education becomes the most important means for easing the transition from dependency on state welfare to economic and social self-responsibility. (Peters, 2011, pp. 122-123)

This is a compelling argument, explaining how neoliberal policies have the potential to hamper the neoliberal objective of encouraging or even forcing individuals to be independent from welfare, by preventing them from obtaining the education necessary to do this. If the state does not provide education, if the state cedes the control and support of education to markets, limiting the access to education to consumers with adequate resources/funds, then only the well-funded students will receive sufficient education to achieve independence, while penniless students will not. Under this extreme neoliberal educational model, neoliberalism defeats both its utopian and political objectives, failing to create economically free subjects. The limited political objectives of an elite few may be served, including those of educational service providers and those of ambitious consumer-students eager to gain ascendancy over the great majority who will no longer be able to afford education. Broader political objectives for most people will not be satisfactorily met, however. An example of the consequences of such approaches has been in the news today as I write, with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former New York City schools chancellor Joel Klein announcing that America’s educational deficiencies are about to threaten the nation’s military security (Koebler, 2012). Interestingly, neoliberal solutions—including more charter schools and a greater emphasis on certain quantifiable skills—were

recommended by Rice and Klein, without any evident awareness that neoliberal solutions may have contributed to this impending crisis in the first place. Increased mastery of foreign languages was also recommended by Rice and Klein, without any discussion of the fact that foreign languages have been radically defunded and eliminated in recent years to make way for standardized test preparation. Generally, the report's insistence on increasing America's level of education supported Peter's assertion that postindustrial global knowledge economies need education more than ever, without Peter's insight that this could best be provided by education as a welfare right. This is because neoliberalism is now axiomatic to most American political discourse, and many politicians, especially those with a conservative bent, revert to it automatically and uncritically. Lecturing in March 1979, Foucault (2008) observed that American neoliberalism had already begun to take on the form of "a widespread movement of political opposition within American society" (p. 193). Today, in early 2012, neoliberal ideals, while still often not identified as such in the popular press, are often echoed by both Republican and Democratic national elected representatives, including many U.S. senators and congressmen, and by members of the popular movements the Tea Party and the Libertarian Party, both of which espouse the virtues of smaller government and freer markets, sometimes even to the point of suggesting the elimination of the Internal Revenue Service (Mitchell, 2012). Foucault identified three targets at which American neoliberalism took aim: (a) President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Keynesian policy initiatives, including the New Deal, a sweeping government program that brought relief to the unemployed and farmers, strengthened labor, established Social Security, raised taxes on the wealthy, imposed regulations on banks and public utilities, and generally instituted a large scale redistribution of wealth to the benefit of the masses (Beschloss, 2009). (b) Social pacts of war, in which the government asks citizens to fight and

risk death in war, in exchange for the promise of social security afterwards. (c) The growth of federal economic and social programs in fulfillment of Keynesian social policies and war pacts (Foucault, 2008, pp. 216-17). Aihwa Ong builds on Foucault's notions of biopower as she, too, links neoliberal governmentality with "America's overweening power . . . [I]n the global popular imagination, American neoliberalism is viewed as a radicalized capitalist imperialism that is increasingly tied to lawlessness and military action" (Ong, 2006, p. 1). What may appear as lawlessness, however, is more likely to be the implementation of law in support of neoliberal rather than Keynesian objectives. Ong (2006) posits that neoliberalism is "a new mode of political optimization . . . [that is] reconfiguring relationships between governing and the governed, power and knowledge, and sovereignty and territoriality" (p. 3). Paraphrasing Peters, Ong identifies these as the key characteristics of neoliberalism: "(a) a claim that the market is better than the state at distributing public resources and (b) a return to a 'primitive form of individualism: an individualism which is 'competitive,' 'possessive,' and construed often in terms of the doctrine of 'consumer sovereignty'" (Ong, 2006, p. 11). Peters explains, "The individual is seen as the most important element in promoting welfare and the well being of individuals is regarded as the logical starting point for an analysis of social and educational policy" (Peters, 2011, p. 35). When considering neoliberalized educational policies or educational policies operating within neoliberal hegemony, then, individual well being should be a fair indicator of the success or failure of such policies. This raises the question whether neoliberalized educational policies can be considered successful if large numbers of individuals are thriving within them, but larger numbers of individuals are withering within in them; or if such policies could be regarded as successful for some but in need of remediation for other individuals. Considering the role of the teacher operating within a neoliberal paradigm, an

individual teacher could be held to a very high standard as “the most important element in promoting welfare” and could also be required to be “competitive” and “possessive,” and prepared to enhance and market himself or herself in compliance with the “consumer sovereignty” of hiring authorities, school boards, parents, and even students in the role of consumers.

The individualization of the educational transaction. Arnot (2009) explores the way neoliberalized educational policy creates “an individualised citizen” (p. 197) who may tend to lack commitment “to using education to alleviate social inequalities and promoting social justice” (Arnot, 2009, p. 198). Referencing the Danish educationalist Leif Moos, who in turn relies upon Habermas, Arnot lists “four defining characteristics of neo-liberal globalising societies”:

- an anthropological view of human beings as rational instruments, willing and able to make informed decisions and to offer their labour freely in the marketplace;
- an image of a post-egalitarian society that tolerates social marginalisation, expulsion and exclusion;
- an image of a democracy where citizens are reduced to consumers in a market society, and where the role of the state is redefined to that of a service agency for clients and consumers;
- a view that policy should be aimed at dismantling state regulation. (Moos as cited in Arnot, 2009, p. 198)

More and more governance responsibilities devolve onto the individual in this scenario, an individual less and less embedded in tradition or bound by duties to community or others, and an individual, even if very young, provided with less support or guidance. Arnot (2009) explains, “The individualisation of the learner citizen is a rather complex affair, often masking—through its languages of choice, rights and voice—the social inequalities within contemporary Western economies” (p. 201). Just as the penniless consumer may have limited access to market

satisfactions, so the resource-poor learner, such as a student from a low-income and socially marginalized family, may find limited purchase in the neoliberalized education market.

Nevertheless, “[i]t is this self-responsibilizing, self-capitalizing individual that is the desired product of neoliberal education policy reforms” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 184). This extreme individualist view of the learner ignores or denies the social and cultural context that delimits individual possibilities, and Rizvi and Lingard echo Arnot in noting that this consuming citizen replaces the social justice seeking citizen (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 185). Despite the utopian neoliberal rhetoric celebrating children as choosers of their own educational and occupational destinies, in practice, “the processes of individualisation are associated with high-performance cultures and expectations and . . . new modalities of social exclusion” (Arnot, 2009, p. 201).

Arnot’s research has revealed that there are often heavy class and gender nuances correlated with which students are able to adapt successfully to the individualisation of learning, with students in particular categories much better able than others to do well in this new learning model (Arnot, 2009, p. 209). It is increasingly incumbent upon an often very young, often very alienated individual neoliberal learner subject to enhance his or her own human capital, or not. Peters has also warned against this individualizing neoliberal tendency:

[T]he statements which recast questions of postindustrialism and the information age in terms of an economic rationalism based on neoliberal individualism—based on a new metanarrative restoring an old ideology—are not only open to serious scrutiny but . . . are wrong headed. (Peters, 2011, p. 99)

The same extremely diversified neoliberalized system pressuring individuals to compete also needs them to get along with one another. The same system that needs individuals to take ever greater responsibilities for themselves and one another is offering in many cases ever less support in preparing those same individuals for successful leadership or even citizenship. It is not wrong to place high expectations on the individual, but this is yet another case where the

neoliberal educational policy equation appears to be unbalanced, with too much pressure on the individual and not enough pressure to support that individual's success. It is, as Peters has written, "wrong headed."

The reification of human capital theory and the abandonment of nonquantifiable values. According to Gary Becker who pioneered his notions of human capital in his 1964 book *Human Capital: a theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education*, knowledge, skills, health and values should all be understood as forms of human capital because they enhance and cannot normally be separated from the individual who possesses them. Foucault identifies the theory of human capital as a distinctly American aspect of American neo-liberalism (Foucault, 2008, p. 219). Becker, like Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, was heavily influenced by the Mont Pelerin Society (Ong, 2006, p. 10), and his human capital theory means that people should view investments in their own education not as expenditures but as investments in their own human capital likely to yield higher returns when they enter the job market. Better educated or more highly skilled people are thus more valuable as human capital, and the same can be said of healthier people, or those who display the virtues of honesty and punctuality (Becker, 2008). In the wake of this very influential theory, people are now regularly discussed as a kind of capital to be capitalized upon, and it is now a widespread discourse practice to analyze everything economically, even matters formerly understood as outside the purview of economic analysis (Foucault, 2008, p. 219). Using Jean-Francois Lyotard's analysis of postmodernism as a basis for interrogating the changing relations between power and knowledge in the neoliberal paradigm, Peters observes, "Anything in the body of knowledge which is not directly translatable into quantities of information, that is, into a computer language, will be abandoned" (Peters, 2011, p. 96). Foucault (2008) explains that Marx "makes labor the

linchpin . . . [showing that] the logic of capital reduces labor to labor power and time. It makes it a commodity and reduces it to the effects of value produced” (p. 221). Foucault recommends that “we should undertake a theoretical criticism of the way in which labor itself became abstract in economic discourse” (Foucault, 2008, p. 222); and in a different paper, I would like to explore some of the ways some feminist theorists have done so. Foucault further notes that whereas Marx said that humans sell the power of their production, the neo-liberal and human capital views hold that humans are capital, and that labor is a form of capital. Neoliberalism returns to a near-classical conception of homo economicus, then, but one in which the “economic man” is “an entrepreneur of himself” (Foucault, 2008, p. 226). John Stuart Mill first introduced the notion of homo economicus in 1836, stressing that in economic matters, actors tend towards rational self-interest; and the idea regained currency less than one and a half centuries later with the rise of neoliberalism (Peters, 2011, p. 194):

The rejuvenation of Homo economicus as a basis for addressing public policy came during the decades of neoliberalism beginning under Thatcher-Reagan that so drastically restructured the public sector reducing the number of public servants, commercializing and privatizing state enterprises, and selling off state assets . . . The building of ‘enterprise culture’ was as much a moral crusade to redefine the nature of society through a redefinition of work as was the first attempts to theorize the economic nature of humankind. (Peters, 2011, p. 195)

Thus homo economicus has evolved from Mill’s original concept, which was not meant to “treat the whole of man’s nature” (Mill, as cited in Peters, 2011, p. 194), to a much more comprehensive program aimed at tailoring all aspects of a person’s life in the service of the economy, making a person first and last and most importantly an economic person, a homo economicus.

This homo economicus model is regularly deployed by educational administrators as they increasingly “market” their schools to “stakeholders.” All stakeholders must accept that they are

entrepreneurs of themselves, with students and their teachers alike constantly grooming themselves for market selection. This neoliberal educational discourse, framing teachers and their students mainly as human capital or homo economica, “has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world,” (Harvey, 2011, p. 3). The hegemony of the discourse calls for close critical scrutiny to disembody practical political objectives from utopian claims and ideologies, and careful discourse analysis may reveal some of the ways neoliberalism has become incorporated in our common sense, particularly in our common sense discussions of education policy in a global context.

Overreliance on testing systems. In addition to the neoliberal educational policy trends already noted—including (a) The creation of education markets, (b) The individualization of the educational transaction, (c) The reification of human capital theory and the abandonment or extreme devaluation of anything nonquantifiable, a tendency I hope to elaborate upon in a future paper. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have also explored the ways in which school messaging systems have been neoliberalized (p. 93). Citing Bernstein, 1971, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) note that the three messaging systems of schooling are curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation, and they have suggested that testing systems should be counted as a fourth school messaging system necessary for the current neoliberal assessment-intensive educational policies (p. 99). This suggestion is debatable, however, because testing could reasonably be classified as a kind of evaluation, and so not in need of a separate new category here. The fact that these theorists would suggest that testing might comprise a fourth school messaging system is testament to the way testing is so highly prioritized under neoliberalization, with the “testing tail wagging the education dog,” as Rizvi has said, and not the other way around. If Bernstein’s principles regarding the three

messaging systems were being followed, this would not be the case, and instead equal emphasis would be given to each of the three areas, creating a more balanced school system more responsive to a wide range of objectives, rather than just measurable or profitable objectives. Although excessive reliance on testing should not comprise a distinct fourth school messaging system, it does comprise a distinct and in this instance fourth neoliberal educational policy trend, in addition to the three just listed. Running parallel to other neoliberal policy trends, this overreliance on testing also means overreliance on measurable or quantifiable goals and the devaluation of what cannot be tested. It also engages the creation of education markets, as a vast testing industry has arisen in tandem with the No Child Left Behind legislation and other testing-intensive policies. If these tendencies are to be countered, less quantifiable and less testable skills will have to be prioritized, skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and foreign languages other than English.

Hayek's Free Men, Like FDR's, Require Funding

In any case, stressing “that globalization has affected education policies of all types,” Rizvi and Lingard (2010) posit that educational policy reform in all these areas “has been linked to the reconstitution of education as a central arm of national economic policy, as well as being central to the imagined community the nation wishes to construct through schooling” (p. 96). This aligns well with Hayek’s injunction that “economic freedom must precede all other freedoms,” and with Foucault’s explanation that neoliberalism is the regulation of society in the service of enterprise. It also dovetails with Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s oft-quoted maxim, “A necessitous man is not a free man” (Power & Allison, 2000), an important and even ironic starting point that neoliberal and Keynesian approaches to policy share in common.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt famously and often cited the eighteenth century British legal opinion, “Necessitous men are not free men.”¹¹ In his 1936 presidential nomination acceptance speech, for example, he began with this premise and elaborated his ethical economic views upon it:

Liberty requires opportunity to make a living—a living decent according to the standard of the time, a living which gives man not only enough to live by, but something to live for . . . A small group had concentrated into their own hands an almost complete control over other people's property, other people's money, other people's labor—other people's lives . . . Today we stand committed to the proposition that freedom is no half-and-half affair. If the average citizen is guaranteed equal opportunity in the polling place, he must have equal opportunity in the market place. (Roosevelt, 1936)

Roosevelt and Hayek, one the father of New Deal Keynesianism and the other the father of neoliberalism, both founded their approaches on the same belief in the primacy of economic freedom. It would seem they could agree, as Roosevelt said, that “a necessitous man was not a free man,” and that, as Hayek wrote, “economic freedom . . . is the prerequisite of any other freedom.” There they parted ways, however, with Roosevelt suggesting a wide social safety net with extensive worker protections and government limits on the power of big business, and Hayek insisting that this was the “road to serfdom,” and that the only way to ensure freedom was to ensure free enterprise, privileging it above all else. Since these two divergent and in many ways opposite paths—Keynesianism and neoliberalism—share the foundational belief in the economic freedom of the individual, it may still be possible for them to find further commonalities and shared values to help address the demonstrated deficiencies of each. For educational policy, both ideologies could more fully question whether their chosen paths are

¹¹ FDR mentioned this quote in 1936 when addressing the Democratic National Convention, and again in 1944 as the lynchpin of his State of the Union Address, for example; and he also mentioned it many other times when explaining his economic and ethical views.

leading to the economic freedom of individual students (albeit one of many desirable outcomes); and both could recalibrate their approaches to better serve this popular ideal.

Nevertheless, Rizvi and Lingard argue that when education as economic policy alters one of (according to them) four school message systems, all four of the systems are affected. This may mean, for example, that while the neoliberally desired effect of increased standardized test scores may well be achieved (although this has proven more elusive than originally theorized), the unintended effect of reduced critical thinking skills may also result, the latter of which does not optimally serve the neoliberal objective of supporting enterprise; because successful, sustainable enterprise requires critically thinking subjects with a whole host of higher order thinking skills that are not or that cannot be tested easily on standardized tests. Thus some neoliberal educational policies may serve only some neoliberal objectives, such as greater accountability, or even just greater measurability, while failing to serve other neoliberal objectives, such as more critically thoughtful and therefore more competent entrepreneurial subjects. These hypothetical objectives are of course aligned with utopian or theoretical neoliberalism, which Harvey has warned us to distinguish strictly from political neoliberalism or neoliberalism in practice. It is generally the utopian version of neoliberalism that is used to justify educational policy changes, rather than the political version that has wrought results that Harvey, Rizvi and Lingard, Peters, Arnot, and so many other theorists are critical of. For example, when education markets are created, the justifying rhetoric defends this as more efficient. In practice, new inefficiencies may result. When educational experiences are individualized, this is idealized as increasing individual choice. In practice, individuals may have fewer real choices. When the human capital theory is advanced, it seems almost impossible to argue that enhancing an individual's earning power is a good idea, and surely every worker

would like to be worth higher pay. The practical side of this may mean, though, that only immediate earning capacity is attended to, while other important aspects of citizenship cultivation are neglected. When anything nonquantifiable is abandoned or devalued, the utopian rhetoric could justify this by idealizing efficiency and even suggesting that what cannot be valued is a waste of time and resources. In practice, and closely connected to a narrow defense of human capital enhancing educational policies, devaluing what is nonquantifiable may mean failing to support cosmopolitan values that are necessary for peaceful coexistence and for sustainable economies as well. Overreliance on testing systems have is supported by innocuous utopian sounding slogans such as “No Child Left Behind,” but as this mass experiment has played out over the years, it has become increasingly apparent that in fact many children have been left behind despite the rhetoric. Broadly speaking, all of these educational policies have placed the social imaginary of neoliberalism at the heart of globalization, and educational resources have been allocated or misallocated accordingly.

Some of these neoliberal policies may have served some students well, but in the face of the global discontent that has been widely expressed in the wake of the American and global financial meltdown of 2008 and 2009, many commentators, including Rizvi and Lingard and Peters, declared that “market fundamentalism [had come] to an abrupt end . . . [and that the neoliberal] ideology had begun to unravel” (Peters, 2011, p. 2). They wrote that “the global neoliberal order [had] been challenged in a number of ways, especially against the realization of its role in creating the global financial crisis that is now affecting all policy areas, education systems and nations” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. xii), and that the recent economic crisis made manifest “the pressing need to imagine another form of globalization” (p. 23). Writing this in 2012, it seems that although neoliberal ideologies may have been recently challenged, the

pressing need to usurp them may not be readily evident to everyone, and neoliberal approaches remain axiomatic to policies of all kinds. In other words, despite failures, especially financial failures, on a global scale adversely affecting millions of people worldwide, neoliberalism remains at the heart of globalization; and for it to be dislodged from that privileged position, something no less compelling must be offered in its place. According to Peters, “We need to look to knowledge and learning systems that provide the basis for forms of economy that are green and sustainable in the long term” (Peters, 2011, p. 4), and he begins to suggest a more specific alternative:

The end point of a pure neoliberal approach to education policy is a fully consumer-driven model, where social or state welfare functions disappear completely. In contrast to a neoliberal model of education policy it can be argued that today there is even more reason to regard education as a form of welfare; indeed, in a postindustrial society or in the emerging global knowledge economy, education becomes the single most important means for easing the transition from dependency on state welfare to economic and social self-responsibility. (Peters, 2011, pp. 122-123)

Here Peters is using a neoliberal argument in support of an alternative to neoliberal educational policies, asserting that the way to end the welfare dependency that is anathema to neoliberalism is to provide “education as a form of welfare.” In other words, needy people may require help in having their needs met before they will be able to meet their needs without help. Peters has suggested that economic alternatives to neoliberal hegemony should be “green and sustainable,” and he does champion education as a welfare right. Beyond that, he does not himself fully develop what the alternative to neoliberalism should be or could be, but he does suggest that future research should seek to illuminate “the delicate intricacies not only of social systems but also their interface with natural systems of all kinds” and that systems theory and the new biology may provide particularly apt models to advance this work (Peters, 2011, p. 4). Rizvi and Lingard also argue in favor of alternatives to neoliberalism, stressing that although the

“neoliberal global imaginary has become dominant . . . there is nothing inevitable about this social imaginary of globalization, and that alternatives are not only possible, but also necessary” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 23). These authors reference the work of Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor in their discussion of the concept of a social imaginary, distinguishing it from a social theory, this latter of which is likely to be held by relatively few people (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 34). Social imaginaries are much more widely held, and variously and ubiquitously expressed by cultural, economic and political means, and they argue: “Taylor’s analysis suggests that neoliberal discourses of globalization are embedded within a social imaginary; and that their transformation requires the exercise of collective political agency, in imagining them differently” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Such change requires alterations of ideologies, including utopian visions, as well as alterations of practices, politics, and policies. Harvey has stressed the importance of attending to the distinction between utopian and political expressions of neoliberalism, and attention to this distinction may be useful in efforts to alter the social imaginary of neoliberalism. Far from a natural teleology, neoliberalism began with utopian theories presented by Hayek and others, then gathered political strength and developed into the hegemonic imaginary that it is today. As Rizvi and Lingard have argued, neoliberalism was created and there is nothing inevitable about it, and if many people agree it is not well serving the world, other theories could lead to a new, more humane and just social imaginary that might serve the world better. Just as the theory of neoliberalism led to the ideology and the hegemony of neoliberalism, so could alternative theories lead to alternative hegemonies, possibly more just and humane ones. Rizvi and Lingard clearly suggest what the very next step should be: “If the neoliberal social imaginary of globalization is to be challenged, new ways of thinking about global interconnectivity and interdependence are necessary” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 200).

Such viable alternative theories are already well underway, offering the possibility of a new social imaginary.

Human Rights and Capabilities—The Next Social Imaginary, the Last Utopia

I argue that the tandem theories of human rights and capabilities now offer an alternative or augmentative social imaginary which is already better serving the world than neoliberalism has done; and what is more, that these theories hold the promise of optimally serving all people and sustaining the planet in Kant's dream of perpetual peace.¹² Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the wake of the Second World War on December 10, 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, forever altered "the moral terrain of international relations" (Glendon, 2002, p. xv).¹³ The moral is primary for the UDHR, and the morality espoused by its Preamble and thirty articles has been foundational for the development of international laws grounded in human rights ever since the declaration's adoption.¹⁴ Grounding her arguments in Kantian ethics, Pradeep Dhillon is working to advance human rights education, linking the Hindu rule of dharma with Kant's Categorical Imperative. Kant clarified his Categorical Imperative at many points in his work, including in his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*: "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always at the same time as an end and never merely as a means" (Kant, 1993, p. 43). Dhillon explicates this lasting moral principle:

[T]his radical turn to duty does not stem either from a self-sacrificial motive or from a hermitlike refusal of the social. Rather, it is in the performance of such duty in universal

¹² Immanuel Kant's 1795 *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, may be viewed in its entirety at: <http://files.libertyfund.org>.

¹³ The full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the Preamble and all thirty articles, are available on the following UN website: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.

¹⁴ The Institute for International Law and Human Rights provides abundant examples of this on their website: <http://lawandhumanrights.org/>. Further examples are readily apparent on the United Nations International Law website: <http://www.un.org/en/law/>.

manner—in extending ourselves to become as inclusive as we can - that we display our regard for ourselves. For, in such dutiful performance, we embrace our responsibility for the perfectibility of our species and create the conditions of our freedom. (Dhillon, 2007, p. 62)

Dhillon is defending the universality of human rights against the critique from cultural difference, strengthening the theory of the global relevance of human rights discourse “so that we can start to educate towards a legitimately universal non-hegemonic regime of human rights—one that is acceptable to all” (Dhillon, 2007, p. 64). This kind of theoretical work is crucial for continuing to advance human rights from a theory to a social imaginary, and educational policy is pivotal for facilitating people’s understanding of and belief in their own worth and the worth of others. According to Rizvi and Lingard, “there has . . . been little thought given to new social policies, including education policy frameworks, which need to flow from the failure of neoliberalism” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 201); but substantial thought has begun to be given to human rights theory, and more attention to it may provide the needed response to neoliberal failures, and to neoliberal successes, too. Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum have advanced the ‘capability approach,’ a robust newer theory which I believe has the potential to become the next hegemonic social imaginary, and one that Rizvi and Lingard have acknowledged as indicating “a promising avenue for exploring an alternative imaginary of globalization, based not on a singular, individualistic or economistic view of human needs, but emphasizing the importance of not only freedom of choice, but also individual heterogeneity and the multidimensional nature of welfare needs” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 201). Functional capabilities are emphasized in the capability approach, or in other words substantive freedoms such as the real capability to enjoy good health, to participate in the economy or in politics, or to live to an old age. These kinds of substantive freedoms or capabilities must be understood in

contrast to negative or theoretical freedoms whereby the person is free to do something that she or he is actually incapable of doing. For example, the functional capability (or substantive freedom) to enjoy bodily health would include the real possibility and necessary resources for a sick person to go see a doctor, while the corollary negative freedom would assert that that sick person is “free” to visit a doctor, even though he or she actually cannot do that because of lack of insurance or another way to pay for the doctor visit. In other words, a capability means a real opportunity to select, as opposed to a theoretical opportunity to select (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 25). “[S]eeing poverty as a deprivation of basic capabilities, rather than merely as low income” (Sen, 1999, p. 20), the capability approach offers a more complex and meaningful way to evaluate the effectiveness and justice of policies. Sen has resisted offering a specific list of capabilities, but Nussbaum proffers the following list of ten, which she calls “Central Capabilities.” In abbreviated form, they are: (a) Life; (b) Bodily health; (c) Bodily integrity; (d) Senses, imagination, and thought; (e) Emotions; (f) Practical reason; (g) Affiliation; (h) Other species; (i) Play; and (j) Control over one’s environment (Nussbaum, 2011, pp. 33-34).

Like Kant, Nussbaum insists on the “principle of each person as an end,” and for this reason it is important to understand that capabilities belong to individuals first, and to groups derivatively (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 35). Dhillon has written, “Roughly, we would be needed to argue that not to pay attention to the environment and other creatures would be tantamount to limiting our humanity” (Dhillon, 2007, p. 62). Here Dhillon is defending the importance of extending these moral principles to the environment and other creatures, aspects Nussbaum has addressed especially with her fourth central capability: “Other species. Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 34). This is a key distinction that I argue marks the capabilities approach’s improvement over the

closely related human rights discourse, but I do not see the two as at all mutually exclusive. Rather, they enhance one another, and I believe a combination of human rights and capabilities, if better theorized and more widely promoted, offer the next needed social imaginary to address the deficiencies of the neoliberalization of educational policy; and the capabilities approach in particular may offer the necessary enhancements to the human capital approach, augmenting rather than rejecting it. Sen has addressed the relationship between the human capital and capabilities (or what he calls “human capability”) approaches, noting that while the former is very useful, it is also very limited and in need of supplementation, “because human beings are not merely means of production, but also the end of the exercise” (Sen, 1999, p. 295). The capabilities approach broadens the focus to include a fuller accounting of what enables people to “lead the lives they have reason to value and to enhance the real choices they have” (Sen, 1999, p. 293). This is why the capabilities approach can be understood as including and adding to the human capital approach rather than replacing it. Both approaches place humanity at the center, and both espouse enhancing a person’s practical abilities. In the capabilities approach, however, money is not everything, and other, not-necessarily-monetary goals—such as a longer, more fruitful life, meaningful work, or more leisure time—are also privileged. Thus Sen is not advocating the overthrow of the neoliberal paradigm or of the human capital approach that has found such favor within it, but he is rather advocating the acknowledgement of what is right and working in the present model, and the augmentation rather than the usurpation of that. Rizvi and Lingard advocate a similarly “incremental” approach to policy reform: “[W]hile the pressures on curriculum reform might be similar throughout the globe, the reforms which result always have a vernacular character as they build incrementally on what has gone before within specific educational systems” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 97). Calling for a new social imaginary, calling

for significant reform to better serve most people of the world, these authors recommend a careful approach, one no less mindful of the local than the global context, and one willing to seek common ground even with seeming ideological adversaries. I believe such an incremental approach is more likely to sway the ordinary men and women who will in fact determine the future course of educational and other policies. Ordinary men and women, neither saints nor theoreticians, and many of them less educated than they ought to be, will need to see how their lives could be made better, how their world could be better served, by something somewhat new.

During the time she was working on the committee to draft the Universal Declaration of human rights, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world” (Roosevelt, 1998). Speaking of the need to continue building upon the foundation the UDHR, Glendon wrote, “But what will be decisive is whether or not sufficient numbers of men and women in ‘small places, close to home’ can imagine, and then begin to live, the reality of freedom, solidarity, and peace” (Glendon, 2002, p. 241). These ordinary men and women, be they global teachers or recruiters or anyone else, are the ones who will actually create and comprise the next social imaginary, whatever it is. They are the ones who actually do decide whether the world will be served by neoliberal, human rights, capabilities or any other organizing principles. Educational policy remains crucial because it can and does significantly determine what people value and imagine, including whether they can value and imagine a world where all children and people are well served, not just a fortunate few of them. What this means for the globalization of teacher labor is that decisions about their global deployment must take into consideration the best interests of everyone involved, including students and their teachers, global or not.

Teachers, wherever they are recruited from and however skilled they are, retain formidable power in their own classrooms, over their own students, and over any given country's success in the global knowledge economy. These instances of international teacher recruitment have the potential to hurt teachers and students and hamper the long term sustainability of the global knowledge economy in at least five ways: by making teachers more vulnerable and less able to organize and negotiate for just compensation, by exacting unacceptable human costs from teachers and their families, by continuing to deprive the least advantaged students of teachers they can identify with from their own communities, by paving the way for local teachers in sufficient numbers to be replaced at first by lower paid immigrants, then by part-timers and eventually by even cheaper online technology, and by reifying stereotypes about who can learn what and who deserves to be paid well. These immigrant teachers still hold the power to prepare students well for the complex creative challenges of the knowledge economy, or not. Organized teachers hold the further power to demand adequate compensation from a society that will need their labor more and more, posing a clear threat to the neoliberalization of educational policy (Compton & Weiner, 2008, p. 264; Gutierrez, 2009, p. 5). This potential, for organized teacher labor to demand much higher pay and better working conditions in exchange for their much needed, highly skilled work, is directly threatened by the neoliberal trend of recruiting teachers from overseas. Teacher migration from developing to developed countries merits careful consideration, lending itself as it does to the explanation that it is just "a simple remedy for the imbalance in the global supply and demand of teachers . . . [or] a natural response to the labor market" (Gutierrez, 2009, p. 5). Rizvi argues in favor of:

the need to understand contemporary ideological constructions of globalization historically, rather than as a set of naturalized economic processes operating in a reified fashion. Unless this is done, many of the neoliberal ideas that have become popular in recent years will continue to appear as a natural and inevitable response to the steering

logic of economic globalization. It will be impossible to recognize the ideology of globalization as historically specific, which serves a set of particular interests on behalf of powerful social forces, namely, the transnational corporate and financial elite. (Rizvi, 2007, p. 258)

In the case of Anglophone Caribbean teacher recruitment to the U.S., for example, a postcolonial analysis would need to consider the colonial history between the two places, including education and labor histories culminating in the Caribbean outmigration of nurses and other labor for many decades before the teacher exodus began; and it would also be important to trace more recent immigration developments. A postcolonial critique could be combined with critical discourse analysis considering the official rationales given by recruiters, school administrators, school board members, and possibly even teachers themselves for this extraordinary strategy; and also attending closely to the content of the initial contract offered to and accepted by the Caribbean teachers. Bringing Rizvi's postcolonial approach to a deeper analysis of the recent trend of the foreign recruitment of teachers for U.S. public schools, triangulated with in-depth interviews of key stakeholders and critical analyses of related discourses could help to clarify the history and context of this extraordinary response to purported teacher shortages, helping to reveal which social actors stand to gain and which to lose, which shared societal and educational values are foregrounded and which are backgrounded, and which portions of discourse are hybridized to which other portions of discourse to legitimize which particular agendas (Fairclough, 2003) .

Key research questions could include, "Does the U.S. recruitment of teachers from overseas undermine teacher organizing in both sending and receiving countries? How is this practice affecting classrooms and communities, including students and families, in both sending and receiving countries? Or, to use Bauman's terminology, it is possible to question whether internationally recruited teachers are 'tourists' or 'vagabonds' (Bauman, 1998, p. 77).

Recruitment agencies and hiring authorities have insisted that this is a natural and effective

solution to teacher shortages, but these assertions call for interrogation. As Bauman has said, “Questioning the ostensibly unquestionable premises of our way of life is arguably the most urgent of the services we owe our fellow humans and ourselves” (Bauman, 1998, p. 5). A postcolonial critical discourse perspective could be particularly effective in challenging neoliberal defenses of this restratification or recolonization of global teacher labor. More empirical research is needed in this vital but understudied area using a combination of surveys and in-depth interviews triangulated with critical discourse analysis of key documents to understand how particular agendas are legitimized (Fairclough, 2003), and I have found it especially fruitful to attend carefully to the perspectives of a few teachers and their adult children who are caught up in these global flows. The view from below merits special scrutiny, as international teacher recruitment may be understood as an “economic adaptation [producing] continuing social and cultural crisis at the bottom of social space” (Willis, 2003, p. 398). As Willis has written, “The theories and qualitative methods of the social sciences are necessary to represent local experience at the grassroots and to understand its connections to the operations of larger institutional and macro forces” (Willis, 2003, p. 390). Only by asking those at the grassroots level what it means for them will it be possible to understand how they see it as affecting their strength or vulnerability as workers, the personal benefits and costs to them and their families, the meaning of cross-cultural contexts and role models, their sense of teacher fungibility and expendability, and their beliefs about such controversial issues as whether or not sufficient numbers of Americans can learn math and science well enough to teach it, and whether or not teachers deserve high pay and job security. Willis has recommended that, “Educators and researchers should utilize the cultural experiences and embedded bodily knowledge of their students as starting points, not for bemoaning the failures and inadequacies of their charges, but

to render more conscious for them what is unconsciously rendered in their cultural practices” (Willis, 2003, p. 413). Focusing on the role of the teacher in the knowledge economy in general and in global flows of teacher labor in particular engages the same underlying imperative, seeking to understand the neoliberalization of global educational policy by attending closely to the foot soldiers or drill sergeants of it; and such an approach likewise promises not just to expose or bemoan “the failures and inadequacies” now so regularly attributed to many if not most teachers, but also “to render more conscious” for teachers and educational policy makers how teachers fit into, are used by, and themselves make sense of globalized education. Whether the role of the teacher in the knowledge economy is to prepare as many students as possible for promised high wage knowledge jobs, to reproduce a social order based on an elite ruling class dominating compliant working masses, to support the reformation of imperialism, to facilitate a utopian future knowledge society, or something else, a theoretically informed ethnographic approach to international teacher recruitment has the potential to contribute to understanding of the role of the teacher in the knowledge economy, as well as the connections between this particular trend and more general trends towards the neoliberalization of global educational policy.

Chapter Three

Methods: The Leon Dash Method of Immersion Interviewing

Research Methods

Featuring intensive interviews with New York City teachers recruited from the Caribbean, followed by interpretation of these interviews, the purpose of this study is to consider how international teachers and their families are adapting to globalizing recruitment strategies and positioning themselves within the globalized knowledge economy. Key research questions include: How does this global deployment of teachers actually work? In other words, what strategies were used to identify and recruit them? What were these teachers guaranteed in their initial contracts? How are these global teachers and their families adapting to their international deployment? How do they, or do they make sense of their international migration as a transgenerational class project? In other words, were they counting on their move to provide better educational and career opportunities for their children, and has it? Exactly what were they promised before they came; and did they get these promises in writing? What are the human costs and benefits, especially for these teachers and their families, but also for students and school systems in their home countries and in their new country? How do these teachers make sense of their situation and what do they want now? What if any rights do they claim as humans, as workers, as potential U.S. citizens, and as global citizens? Finally, what insights do they have into the challenges facing some of America's hardest to staff public schools? In addition to interviews with teachers, interviews were also conducted with some of the adult (over 18) children of the recruited teachers. The data collection for this project was designed with reference to the life history research methods developed by Bertaux and Thompson (1997), the

immersion interviewing technique developed by Dash, and the materialist feminist perspective of Rowbotham (1999). The interview protocol used closely patterned that developed by Dash over his many years as a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist with the *Washington Post* newspaper. I chose this method over others because it effectively elicits the lived human experiences of individuals caught up in larger events. In the case of Dash's work, an example of this would be the stories of an impoverished mother caught up in recidivist crime and intergenerational poverty. In the case of my own work, an example of this would be the stories of a teacher mother participating in a global project to advance both her own career and her children's educational and other prospects. I also followed the protocols established by Dash, tape recording the interviews which I conducted in teachers homes and elsewhere, and then completely transcribing these interviews before writing in narrative form. Once collected, the data was interpreted with reference to Bertaux and Thompson and Rowbotham's theories and to Norman Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis, and Aihwa Ong's theories of flexible citizenship (1999).

Participants and Site

The target population for this research was current New York City public school teachers who were recruited from Caribbean countries in 2001. This year was chosen because the review of the very limited literature available on the topic indicated that 2001 and 2003 were years in which New York City public school authorities actively recruited these teachers at various job fairs in that region (American Federation of Teachers, 2009; The Black Institute, 2010; Degazon-Johnson, 2011; Mathews, 2009; Sack, 2001; Silvera, 2011). The first site where I initially sought NYC teachers of Caribbean origin was The Black Institute, a non-profit think tank and advocacy organization located in New York, New York. I found this organization from references to it in

alternative media sources (Degazon-Johnson, 2011; Mathews, 2009; Sack, 2001; Silvera, 2011), and also through a reference from Dr. Alyssa Hadley Dunn, who has investigated the overseas recruitment of teachers for American public schools in other contexts, including in her doctoral dissertation (Dunn, 2011). Members of this organization introduced me to an officer of the affiliated Association of International Teachers, who subsequently agreed to participate in my study and introduced me to a number of teachers from Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and St. Vincent. After making some useful contacts with Caribbean teachers through The Black Institute and the Association of International Teachers, I followed the advice given to me by my committee members during my proposal defense to seek additional contacts through other avenues unconnected with this particular organization. After telephoning and emailing several churches and clubs without much success, I found a website for the African-American/Caribbean Educator's Association, a non-partisan mutual aid society headquartered in Queens, New York. The president of the organization, Rosalind O'Neal, forwarded my request to a few members she thought might be interested, and in this way I met several more teachers, including all of the Jamaicans who agreed to participate in my study. I then used a snowballing technique to find and interview other relevant informants as suggested by the teachers themselves, including their adult children and others.

Here is a sample email script to be used for the initial participant solicitation, after gaining approval from my university's Institutional Review Board:

To: The Black Institute, and the Association of International Educators; or to the African-American/Caribbean Educators Association

From: Margaret Fitzpatrick, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Date: ASAP (Preparing this document October 27, 2012)

Re: Interview invitation for NYC Caribbean teachers and related others

Greetings.

As part of a research project entitled 'Globalizing Teacher Labor for the Knowledge Economy: The Case of New York City's Caribbean Teachers', you are invited to participate in extensive interviews by PhD student Margaret Fitzpatrick under the direction of her advisor, Dr. Pradeep Dhillon, both from the College of Education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Your participation would be greatly valued. It is worthwhile to call greater general and scholarly attention to the case of New York City's Caribbean teachers, and I hope many of you choose to participate. Please contact me if you are interested, or if you would like more information.

Sincerely,

Margaret Fitzpatrick
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Fitzpa11@illinois.edu
fitzperfectly@hotmail.com
Home phone: (217) 344-2350

Interview Content

Employing a life history approach to qualitative data collection, Bertaux and Thompson use social genealogies of families (1997). For example, for one project they collected occupational data extending back five generations to the mid 1800s, and then they configured the results into visual family trees, which are also family occupational and class trees (Bertaux & Thompson, 1997, p. 68). Similarly, and because my preliminary research has suggested that educational possibilities for children were a primary motivator for at least some Caribbean teachers to move to New York, I encouraged subjects to share with me some information about their family's occupational history, if they seemed interested and open to sharing that type of information. Such information covered in various instances parental occupations, family status, number of children, family considerations in the recruitment decision process, and impacts of the recruitment on children and other family members. My interview questions were patterned on questions developed by Leon Dash in his immersion interviewing method, discussed at greater

length in Chapter Three, and just below the actual lists of questions which appear just below. The Dash protocol dovetails with the precepts of Bertaux and Thompson, both methods emphasizing family contexts and class considerations. Interpreting this data, it is possible to develop a limited schema of class, situating this key decision within the context of intergenerational class projects and networks of familial obligations (Bertaux & Thompson, 1997; Rowbotham, 1999). Bertaux and Thompson have also identified housing as an essential aspect of life history research:

It seems appropriate to end with a dream house . . . We use them to project fantasies of living other lives, of belonging to other social milieux. And sometimes these fantasies become real social projects. . . Yet this double character of housing has been too rarely studied by social scientists, and scarcely at all from the point of view of social mobility. . . While such a mobilization of an extended family is rare, we think it particularly important to emphasize the extent to which housing is a form of maintenance or advancement of social position which very often involves intergenerational models and direct help, and typically represents the joint engagement of a couple rather than a lone individual. It rarely provides an individual path to upward mobility: indeed, on the contrary, it is likely to falter with family fission. (1997, pp. 174-175)

Accordingly, in an effort to better understand the transgenerational class projects teachers may be attempting to leverage with their international teaching careers, I paid particular attention to where teachers lived and what types of housing they lived in before, just after, and finally about 12 years after their initial recruitment. Specifically, I asked the teachers whether they owned homes in their home country at the time of their recruitment, and whether they own homes now, either in their country of origin or in the vicinity of New York City. This data sheds light on both the motivations for and the success of the teachers' decisions to move, and what effects the move may have had on family homeownership as an aspect of a transgenerational class project.

Discussion of Other Demographic Data Solicited

I noted the gender of each participant, for which the categories male or female sufficed, because gender appeared to be influential in how the teacher's made sense of their recruitment

and immigration, and some aspects of the experience may have differed according to gender. I noted either the year each participant was born, or the range of years, depending on the level of confidentiality requested. This helped me to establish how much personal and professional experience each participant had or appeared to have at the time of recruitment. I noted the country of birth of each participant, partly for the intrinsic interest of this data and partly in an effort to find teachers recruited from more than one and preferably four different countries. In the end, I was able to interview teachers from Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana, and St. Vincent. No teacher I interviewed was born outside the Caribbean. I asked them for their highest level of education, helping to establish the very high standards they had to meet before they were chosen for recruitment. I asked them what subjects they teach or taught. This data helped to challenge or corroborate some reports that overseas recruitment for U.S. public schools mainly targets math, science, and special education. I asked them about their visa status upon arrival and now, to better understand the visa concerns some of them still have; and to clarify the relationship they see between worker's rights, citizenship rights, and human rights. I asked them about their children, especially those who were still dependent on them in 2001 when they were recruited. This data insists upon some acknowledgement of the possibility that these teachers may have parental responsibilities, an important aspect of understanding their decisions and motivations. I asked them whether they were married when they came, and whether they brought a dependent spouse with them. This helped to clarify the family context in which many of them were embedded at the time of the recruitment. I asked them to share their initial impressions of the New York City public schools where they were assigned, and this question elicited impassioned insights bearing the special authority of what I call the Caribbean teachers' insider/outsider perspectives. They are outsiders because they were brought in from another

country after having been raised and educated themselves in very different systems; but they are insiders because they have now been inside the New York public schools, many of them teaching there for more than a decade.

General script for intensive interviews. Once subjects agreed to participate, and after I explained the Institutional Review Board protocols to them and asked them to sign the necessary forms and tell me whether or not they preferred confidentiality, we scheduled interviews in person, over the telephone, or via Skype. At the designated interview times, I used the following questions, often reminding them of their right to skip questions they preferred not to answer. The first set of questions (TQ) were for teachers, and the next set were for their adult children (AC). Note that the first four questions are taken directly from the Dash method of immersion interviewing, that the remaining questions also follow Dash's precepts, and that all of the questions were pre-approved by Professor Dash himself:

Interview questions for the teachers themselves (TEACHER questions marked TQ).

TQ #1: Tell me about your school history, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #2: Tell me about growing up inside the family, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #3: Tell me about growing up in a religious institution, or outside of one, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #4: Tell me about growing up outside the family, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #5: Tell me about your decision to teach overseas, in the U.S., including your recruitment experience, your recruiter, exactly what was promised or what you understood to be promised, and how those promises were made, i.e. verbally or in writing.

TQ#6: Tell me about your first impressions of the U.S. and your early U.S. experiences.

TQ #7: Tell me how your NYC teaching career has affected your family.

TQ #8: Tell me how this move has affected other people in your home country. For one example, do you think this has altered for the better or worse the situation of your

relatives there? For another example, do you think this has altered for better or for worse the situation of your former school there?

TQ#9: What if any suggestions do you have for Caribbean teachers who are considering following in your footsteps?

TQ #10: What else would you like to add, perhaps something important I forgot to ask about?

TQ#11: Would you like to suggest someone else I should interview in relation to these matters, such as one or more of your adult children, or another teacher you know recruited at the same time as you?

Interview questions for the adult children of recruited teachers (marked AC).

ACQ#1: Tell me about your school history, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #2: Tell me about growing up inside the family, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #3: Tell me about growing up in a religious institution, or outside of one, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #4: Tell me about growing up outside the family, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #5: Tell me about your parent's decision to teach in the U.S. Question, including the recruitment process as you understood it and what promises you believe were made to your family.

ACQ #6: Tell me about your first impressions of the U.S. and your early U.S. experiences.

ACQ #7: Tell me how your parent's career has affected your family. Question #8: Tell me how this move has affected other people in your home country.

ACQ #8: Tell me how this move has affected other people in your home country. For example, relatives who did not move with you, or your parent's former students.

ACQ #9: What if any suggestions do you have for other Caribbean teachers considering such a career move?

ACQ #10: What else would you like to add, perhaps something important I forgot to ask about?

The Leon Dash Method. The questions I used and the ways I went about asking them were based on what I call "the Leon Dash method of immersion interviewing." I studied this

method with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and UIUC Professor Leon Dash in Fall 2010, and my first four questions are based directly on questions developed by Professor Dash throughout his Pulitzer Prize-winning career with the *Washington Post*. The answer to each question took between ten minutes and an hour or more, depending on how much time the interviewee spent with me. Some of these interviews were conducted in person, some via telephone (in combination with in-person meetings), and some via Skype or telephone. Participants were advised that they could stop at any time and that they could skip any questions they preferred not to answer. Following the method recommended by Professor Dash, I audio recorded these interviews, taking just a few written notes during the interviews; and then transcribed the taped interviews later for accuracy before writing my reports of them for this dissertation.

Interpretation Procedure

Once data has been collected from these confidential in person or online interviews, I collated and transcribed the data, then analyzed and interpreted it in light of various theories explored in the literature review section. In particular, I considered the data with reference to transgenerational class schemas (Bertaux, 1997; Rowbotham, 1993), interpreting it from a poststructuralist anthropological perspective (Ong, 1999), noting especially evidence of neoliberal governance and adaptations to late capitalism (Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2011). This yielded ample data to make theoretical sense of this important instance of the globalization of teacher labor for the knowledge economy. This concludes my method.

Chapter Four

The Interviews: The View From Brooklyn and the View From Port of Spain

Introduction

This is a case study of selected New York City public school teachers who were recruited from the Caribbean in 2001. This subject interests me for a number of reasons, including the fact that I have a background in international teaching myself, having taught in Japan, Korea, Egypt and Kuwait, and also on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico, and in a public school in Illinois. With this firsthand experience as an international educator, I became sensitized to the extraordinary professional and personal flexibility increasingly demanded of teachers, especially within increasingly globalized contexts. That is why I decided to focus on a population of international teachers for my dissertation research, seeking to learn more through them about the nexus between knowledge workers' rights, citizenship rights, and human rights.

The title of my dissertation is *Globalizing Teacher Labor for the Knowledge Economy: The Case of New York City's Caribbean Teachers*. My thesis is that international teacher recruitment, and in particular the U.S. public school recruitment of highly trained teachers from “developing” countries, has become an illusory panacea for alleged teacher shortages, a short-term strategy for staffing classrooms instead of a longer-term and much more difficult and costly set of strategies for really prioritizing education as a necessary core value of a just and sustainable knowledge economy. Focusing on the case of New York City's Caribbean teachers and privileging their testimony about their responses to such recruitment can elucidate many of the transnational and transgenerational contours of this emerging strategy of the neoliberalized global governance of teacher labor.

Brief Background

As noted in more detail in chapter one, in the summers of 2001 and 2003, representatives from New York City's public schools sent a team of recruiters on a mission to hire some of the best, most experienced teachers from Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and other predominantly Anglophone Caribbean nations to come and teach in some of the city's poorest, hardest to staff schools. Abetted by experienced New York teachers who had themselves emigrated from the Caribbean many years earlier, these recruiters appear to have understood how to identify the region's most highly prized teachers, and what to say to persuade them to undertake jobs widely recognized as so tough that few or no qualified Americans were willing to do them. Motivated by recruitment promises of ample salaries and benefits, and visa, housing, and other transitional assistance for them and their families, and in many cases hoping in particular for better educational and career possibilities for their children, hundreds of the most prestigious teachers in the Caribbean pulled up stakes, quitting their well-established careers, selling their homes, and leaving behind their homelands and everything and almost everyone they knew, to embark on a voyage to America, a place many thought of as the land of opportunity and the world beacon of human rights. Now more than a decade into this experiment in globalizing teacher labor, with records of satisfactory and even excellent service in the difficult jobs they were recruited to do, hundreds of these teachers report that much of the promised and expected material support has never materialized. Many are still without permanent residency status and, of even more pressing concern, many of them find that their adult children are no longer eligible to remain in the United States legally (American Federation of Teachers, 2009; The Black Institute, 2010; Degazon-Johnson, 2011; Mathews, 2009; Sack, 2001; Silvera, 2011).

As explained more extensively in chapter two, some of the theoretical background I found most useful preparatory to my data collection included Aihwa Ong's work on flexible citizenship and Michel Foucault's discussions of the immigrant as an entrepreneur of himself or herself. I also found my readings in Caribbean sociology and Caribbean feminism very helpful, especially some of the work of Rhoda Reddock and Christine Barrow. These latter scholars helped me to understand the family structures and gender identities that I came across in my research.

The method that I used for the study is explained in greater detail in chapter three. I call my approach the Leon Dash Method of Immersion Interviewing. Leon Dash won a Pulitzer Prize for his series of *Washington Post* articles on the black urban underclass, work that he later made into a book entitled *Rosa Lee: A Mother and her Family in Urban America*. Professor Dash is currently a professor at my university and a member of my dissertation committee, and I have studied this method with him. He approved my list of interview questions:

Interview questions for the teachers themselves (TEACHER questions marked TQ).

TQ #1: Tell me about your school history, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #2: Tell me about growing up inside the family, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #3: Tell me about growing up in a religious institution, or outside of one, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #4: Tell me about growing up outside the family, starting with your earliest memory.

TQ #5: Tell me about your decision to teach overseas, in the U.S., including your recruitment experience, your recruiter, exactly what was promised or what you understood to be promised, and how those promises were made, i.e. verbally or in writing.

TQ #6: Tell me about your first impressions of the U.S. and your early U.S. experiences.

TQ #7: Tell me how your NYC teaching career has affected your family.

TQ #8: Tell me how this move has affected other people in your home country. For one example, do you think this has altered for the better or worse the situation of your relatives there? For another example, do you think this has altered for better or for worse the situation of your former school there?

TQ#9: What if any suggestions do you have for Caribbean teachers who are considering following in your footsteps?

TQ #10: What else would you like to add, perhaps something important I forgot to ask about?

TQ#11: Would you like to suggest someone else I should interview in relation to these matters, such as one or more of your adult children, or another teacher you know recruited at the same time as you?

Interview questions for the adult children of recruited teachers (marked AC).

ACQ#1: Tell me about your school history, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #2: Tell me about growing up inside the family, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #3: Tell me about growing up in a religious institution, or outside of one, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #4: Tell me about growing up outside the family, starting from your earliest memory.

ACQ #5: Tell me about your parent's decision to teach in the U.S. Question, including the recruitment process as you understood it and what promises you believe were made to your family.

ACQ #6: Tell me about your first impressions of the U.S. and your early U.S. experiences.

ACQ #7: Tell me how your parent's career has affected your family. Question #8: Tell me how this move has affected other people in your home country.

ACQ #8: Tell me how this move has affected other people in your home country. For example, relatives who did not move with you, or your parent's former students.

ACQ #9: What if any suggestions do you have for other Caribbean teachers considering such a career move?

ACQ #10: What else would you like to add, perhaps something important I forgot to ask about?

I interviewed five teachers and five of their adult children in Brooklyn last spring, and then I interviewed five more teachers in their homeland of Trinidad and Tobago last July and August. Responding to my list of prepared questions and also speaking with me informally as I visited with them in their homes, neighborhoods, and churches, my subjects shared with me their life histories before and after their recruitments to teach in New York. The results of these intensive interviews appear below, first the Brooklyn interviews and then the Port of Spain interviews.

Brooklyn Interview Participants

Angela Nestle,* c. 60, Trinidad, at home in Brownsville, Brooklyn, a 2001 recruit who waited twelve years for her green card while her children aged out of legal status. “Special educator waits 12 years for a green card”

Augustus Nestle,* c. 31, Trinidad, at home in Brownsville, Brooklyn, a DJ with a green card, taking care of his family. “Green card holder puts his family of origin first”

Angel Nestle,* c. 28, Trinidad, visiting with her mother in Brownsville, Brooklyn, came with mother age 16, aged out of status. “Outlaw pastry chef raising an American son”

Arthur Nestle,* c. 23, Trinidad, at The Black Institute in Manhattan, working for immigrant rights, out of status. “In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king”

Sallie Baker, c. 62, Jamaica, Seventh Day Adventist Elementary School in Brooklyn, got a U, no green card. “Living with a U: Out of work and out of status after 12 years”

Martha Menard, c. 60, Guyana, at home in Canarsie, Brooklyn, a 2001 recruit with an international culture career now teaching middle school music in New York. “Guyanese cultural attaché teaching New York middle schoolers to sing”

Bernard Longford, c. 50, St. Vincent, Brooklyn, came with his wife, now has a green card. “Rastafarian math teacher rocks school reform”

Malachi Copperfield, c. 25, Trinidad, at The Black Institute in Manhattan, working for immigrant rights, out of status. “Young architect waits to build his American dreams”

Fannie Dickens, c. 55, Jamaica, at home in Canarsie, Brooklyn, a 2001 recruit with a green card and a brownstone duplex. “Jamaican kindergarten teacher prospering in New York schools”

Maylie Dickens, c. 28, Jamaica, via Skype from Emory Law in Atlanta, came in 2001 with her parents. “Jamaican law graduate staying on to pay student loans”

The View from Brooklyn

Angela Nestle* was my first and most reliable guide to the 2001 recruitment experiences of selected New York City Caribbean teachers and their adult children. As an activist agitating for their green card and other rights, she was able to explain their situation to me and to introduce me to several teachers willing to participate in my project. I first met Angela on my very first reconnaissance trip to New York in July, 2012, when I accepted an invitation from Bertha The Black Institute in Manhattan. As I mentioned in Chapter Three, which is the discussion of my research methods, The Black Institute was the first place where I found anybody willing to introduce me to Caribbeans teaching in New York, when Bertha Lewis and others there told me I would be welcome to stop by their offices while I was in the city. When I went to the offices late one afternoon in July, Bertha Lewis herself was there to greet me, along with Angela and her son Arthur, and a few other people whose names I did not write down and do not now remember. Angela and her son sat down with me in a small meeting room during that first meeting, to tell me about some of the difficulties of this group of teachers and their adult children, and to show me the two publications they had recently prepared to bring these problems to a wider audience. It was at that time that both of them offered to participate more fully in my dissertation research project, but I explained to them that I could not formally interview them for quite a while yet, as I first had to gain the necessary approvals from the four members of my dissertation committee, and from my university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB).

I passed my preliminary examination by my committee members in December, 2012; and I gained IRB approval the following February. Accordingly, I re-connected with Angela and we

set up a regular Tuesday night phone appointment so that she could share with me her experience as a recruited teacher as well as her current concerns for herself, her children, and others. She suggested other teachers I might invite for interviews, and eventually she introduced me to more than half of the subjects I eventually interviewed at length for this project.

Angela hosted me in her Brownsville, Brooklyn home during several of my Spring, 2013 research trips to New York, offering me the spare bedroom when it was free, or the front room couch when it was not, because her elderly aunt was making one of her regular extended visits in-between visiting her own children in Canada and Trinidad. Angela did not hesitate when I asked if I could stay with her during my trips to New York, but I hesitated myself when she told me her Brownsville address. Brownsville, the birthplace of many notables including Howard Zinn, Al Sharpton, and Larry King, is notorious for its many deteriorating public housing projects and for its high crime rate. Famous in the 1930s and 1940s as the home of Murder, Inc., an organized crime syndicate, Brownsville's more recent murder rate is more disturbing still: According to New York City Police Department data, this neighborhood had the highest murder rate in the city in 2011[1]. When I asked Angela if I would be safe in Brownsville, she laughed and said, "Don't worry, I live just up the block from the subway. You will be fine. You can use the treadmill in the basement." Use the treadmill for my exercise instead of strolling around the dangerous neighborhood, is what I inferred from that, and I did not find it reassuring. Her son, Arthur was nearby while we were discussing this over the phone, so she also put him on the speaker phone and he also reassured me that he thought I would be perfectly safe. He noted that the train, the market, and the bodega are all one block away, and that there is a park right across the street where I could "take some exercise." They both sounded quite sure I would be perfectly safe with them, so I went. The first time I arrived in front of her three-story Brownsville

brownstone, in a taxi straight from JFK airport, the Armenian taxi driver warning me I would be better off in a Manhattan hotel with my blond hair and blue eyes, Angela was smiling at me out her ground floor front window, and then throwing open the wrought iron gate in front of her front door to welcome me inside. In fact, she and her sons, and sometimes her elderly aunt, never left me alone for a moment of my time in Brownsville. They escorted me everywhere, advising and guiding me every step of the way.

Angela owns the brownstone where I stayed with her. She owns the whole three story building, including three two- and three-bedroom apartments above ground, and a finished basement with two more bedrooms and a kitchenette and full bathroom in the basement. She bought the brand new property from a developer in 2010, and she and her three children and grandchild moved right into the ground floor and basement, along with two more families of Caribbean renters for the upstairs apartments. For the 9 years before that, Angela and her family had shared a one bedroom apartment, sometimes sharing it with another young Trinidadian woman whom Angela has described as being “like another daughter” to her, and that young woman’s two small children. Throughout most of that time, Angela’s 80-year-old Aunt Bernadette lived with them for about half of every year, about three months in the spring and three months in the fall. Although the family has more space now, they still choose to spend much of their time at home in one another's company, cooking and eating together in Angela's kitchen, or socializing and watching television together on her sectional sofa. Bernadette never misses her daily soap operas, Angela never misses the nightly news from Trinidad and Tobago, and her sons Augustus and Arthur rarely miss televised professional basketball or football games.

When I stayed with them on four occasions in the late winter and spring, Angela worked long hours at her school, then came home and socialized all evening and weekend long, on the phone or with visitors. She is a great churchgoer, and one weekend that I spent with her in late May, she took me to church three times. On a Saturday morning, she and Bernadette took me along for a women's prayer breakfast in the basement of an Episcopalian church in Flatbush. A Jamaican woman presided at that event, leading us along with about forty other women and two men in songs and prayers for women's empowerment and for greater respect and support for women. The next morning, Angela escorted me to her home church, The Unity Pyramid of Truth on New York Avenue. Housed in an old mansion, we joined fewer than twenty congregants for joyful singing, preaching, and guided meditation. Every adult who greeted me there insisted that he or she "saw the Christ in [me]." Evidently this is their standard welcome for all new visitors. That Sunday evening, Angela brought me to a Roman Catholic church for a pan and choral concert. There were more than two hundred people in the audience listening to Baroque and Renaissance classics rendered by a small pan steel drum orchestra, along with a range of choral selections.

I ate many traditional Caribbean dishes while I was staying at Angela's house, including Bernadette's Split Pea and Cowheel Soup, and Angela's Trinidadian Chicken, a recipe she shared with me:

Angela's Trinidadian Chicken

Ingredients: One or two whole chickens, fresh lime, scallions, fresh thyme, salt, chili, garlic, coconut or other oil, and Jamaican or Trinidadian curry, which is not hot.

Directions: Chop it up and wash it with water and lime.

Marinate it overnight in crushed scallions, fresh thyme, salt and chili.

Next day, put a little (coconut or other) oil in the pan, then brown crushed garlic in it.

Add one glass of water mixed with mild curry or Garam Masala, then add to pan. Cook it.

(Cooking the curry makes it easier to digest, Angela said.)

Add chicken, mixing and coating.

Add just enough water to half cover it. (Not too much water, or it will be soupy.)
Simmer for about one hour.
Serve with roti, and rice, and veg dishes including:

Potatoes, Spinach and Pumpkin (three separate dishes):

Cook the potatoes, then mix them with chick peas and rosemary.
Sauté the spinach with onions, garlic, and tomatoes.
Mix the cooked pumpkin with crushed leeks and crushed garlic.
Curry may be added to any of the above vegetables. Salt to taste.

Angela said she rarely eats in restaurants, and she estimated that during the 12 years she has lived in New York, she has only stepped foot inside of a restaurant about 10 times. She said she prefers the taste, health, and value of her own home cooking, and her Aunt Bernadette seconded this. “Once I ate some of that Kentucky Fried Chicken, and then I was sick for a whole day,” Bernadette said. Both women are very careful about what they eat and what they feed their families. They never bother with dried herbs, either, preferring to use only fresh ingredients and growing some of their favorite herbs in pots in the front window of their apartment. Angela said she cooks the same way now that she always cooked her whole life growing up in Trinidad, although now she finds it more difficult to find fresh and affordable ingredients in her Brownsville neighborhood. She said that sometimes she asks her older son, Augustus, to drive her to different parts of Brooklyn so that she can buy better ingredients. She said the Chinese and Jewish neighborhoods tend to have the freshest fish, meat, and vegetables, and that much of the produce in her own neighborhood is

just wilted, and so expensive . . . In the black community, if you buy a cucumber, in two days it turns to water. If you buy a cucumber in the Chinese or Jewish neighborhoods, it will still be hard in a week. Right here across the street [from her house], if I buy four little tomatoes for a dollar, they will get brown in two days. So I take the train or my son takes me far away where we can get better fruits and fish swimming in tanks, it is that fresh . . . The thing is to buy the food that is good. You have to go up by the Chinese people in Bed Stuy [short for Bedford Stuyvesant, another Brooklyn neighborhood], or in the Spanish speaking community. You can't get the fresh food in the black community.

Feeding her family of four, and sometimes five or eight or nine, on her one teacher salary proved a constant challenge for Angela, especially since she found herself living in a food desert, which is an area where healthful food is very difficult to obtain for those who do not own automobiles. “To survive on that one teacher's salary, every 99 cent store was my friend,” Angela said.

If this week apples were a dollar, I bought apples. Every week I had at least three red vegetables, three green vegetables, and three kinds of fruit. I always like to have a piece of each color in the fridge. And then with my last dollar, I would buy seasoning, chives and thyme, and grind it up and put it in a bottle. I bought chicken in the 99 cent store, four legs for a dollar. I chopped it up and everybody got a little, little piece. But everybody did get a piece. That is how we had to live to survive here. That is why I tell people, when I came here, my standard of living dropped. I'm not looking down on people, but come on. You recruited me because you needed me, and then you just keep pushing me down, pushing me down. I mean, after 12 years working with the neediest children in one of the highest needs schools, I still have to go to a far neighborhood to buy a tomato or a cucumber.

Angela said it was always easier for her to find the fresh ingredients she likes in any part of her native Trinidad and Tobago. She said she was diagnosed with a slight blockage of the bronchial tubes a few months ago, a diagnosis that did not surprise her because she has a family history of asthma-type problems. “It is not too bad. Going upstairs is a problem sometimes,” she said, adding, “At home [in Trinidad], I could drink coconut water by the beach. I can change my diet a bit and feel better. That's hard to do here.”

Growing up in Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad and Tobago, Angela recalled starting preschool at the age of three or four, the usual age. Her earliest school memories are stressful ones, because for the longest time she could not read, and she wanted to write with her left hand rather than her right. “My sister explained to me that what actually happened was that I started off as a left hander, but then because it was not acceptable to write with the left hand, I had to write with my left hand.” Although it did not take her very long to adopt the custom of writing

with her right hand, learning to read was a much lengthier and more fraught challenge for Angela.

As I grew older, I began to realize that a lot of my problems in school came from not being able to read or write like the other children. When I was about nine, my mother sent me to live with her cousin who was a teacher during the week. At weekends, she dropped me off at home, and then I would go back with her during the week.

Angela surmised that her mother figured living with a teacher might help her make better progress in reading, but that did not really work. Although she continued to make good progress in math, reading continued to be an almost insurmountable struggle for her. By the time she was 10 or 11, her mother decided she was old enough to make the longer trip to school by herself, so she brought her back home from her teacher cousin's house. Angela said that no one ever mentioned the word dyslexia at that time, but that now in retrospect it seems likely that she had an undiagnosed learning disability.

She persisted in her educational pursuits nevertheless, attending the same Adventist school from ages 9 through 18, and then earning a 2-year associate's degree in business from an Adventist college. "By the time I finished my Associate's, I realized I was not cut out to be doing financial statements, and I began to work with the Carmelite sisters, the nuns," she said. "And then in 1980, I began to teach with them. I taught with them from 1980 to 2001, when I came up here [to New York City]." Angela was 18 when she first began working in the Arima branch of the Carmelite schools for mentally disabled children. She first worked as a volunteer, and she took some time off to go to Jamaica with a friend and complete her bachelor's degree in business administration. When she returned to Trinidad, she first worked as an accountant and book store manager for the Adventists, but she wanted to get into teaching. Before long, she was able to switch from volunteer work to paid work with disabled youth, and she continued working with

the Carmelite sisters while she earned her teaching credentials and took on more and more responsibilities at the Memisa Home for the Mentally Handicapped.

I went to teachers' college, and I did my M.Ed. with Sheffield. All at the same time, I taught, I raised my kids, I studied education, I coached track and field, basketball, football, I was a swim coach. . . I took my students to compete in the Special Olympics.

Angela became a Certified Special Olympics Equestrian Coach after one of the heirs to the Angosturra Bitters fortune noticed her passing with her students in a broken down school bus, and stopped her to ask how she could help. "Apparently, each of the Angosturra Bitters heirs were required to choose a charity, and she chose our school," Angela said. "She gave us a check for \$53,500 U.S. dollars to buy a vehicle for the children . . . The next \$50,000 was to renovate the school. The next \$15,000 was for a computer lab for the children." This benefactor also financed special opportunities for Angela's students, including horseback riding and a small cottage industry. Angela found a retired couple to run the cottage industry, where handicapped adults could make things like kitchen towels, potholders and hot sauce, sell the items, and then keep the profits. She reached out to the Riding Association of Trinidad for funds, because, "They were what you call Trinidad Whites, the people who own the big businesses." She persuaded some of the members of the Riding Association to help her organize and pay for horses and a place for her students to ride, as well as riding clothes and travel funds so that she could bring some of her students to the United States to compete in the Special Olympics. "Every time I go back home, they ask, 'When are you coming back?' Because there is nobody now to put in all that much time and run the riding school."

Angela was not always so busy and sociable. She said that when she was very little, she "grew up isolated . . . I played by myself." Her father worked as a draftsman at an architectural firm, and she said that in this way he was able to provide a comfortable lifestyle for the family.

Her mother had worked as the Registrar for Births and Deaths in Port of Spain before she married, but then she stopped to raise her children. “We had a three bedroom house, we had dogs, we always had pets,” she said, “and we would take occasional drives to the country for long holidays. We had a normal family. My parents had their issues sometimes, but that didn’t affect us.” While she was still in elementary school, her family moved east of Port of Spain to be nearer to the Adventist school that her mother chose for her and her two sisters. Although education is free through the tertiary level in Trinidad now, only elementary level education was free at that time, so her parents paid the tuition for Angela and her two sisters to continue their educations.

“Mommy paid for my sisters to go to the Adventist high school, and I just followed,” she said.

Mommy wouldn’t indulge any insubordination or any talking back. She was a disciplinarian with just the eyelid. She was much fairer than me, her skin was so pale, and her blood would just creep up her neck. Red . . . The way we grew with our parents, nobody ever felt held back or pushed out.

When Angela was 21 and her mother was 52, her mother died of cancer. Her father lived to the age of 82 and died shortly before she accepted the offer to teach in New York in 2001.

Although Angela and her sisters attended Adventist schools, their mother raised them in the Methodist church. “I remember getting licks to go to church and go to first communion,” she said. “I didn’t want to get up and go up the road. I didn’t have any connection with the young people. All the people at that church went to the same school, and I didn’t connect with them. Anyway, I did go. I went to the Methodist church from little going up into my teen years. Everybody went to the Methodist church. When we moved east, to be closer to the Adventist school, we started going to the Adventist church. But after a while, I had had enough of that, and then I met the children’s father, and he was Roman Catholic.” By the time Angela met her

children's father, she had already been teaching with the Carmelite nuns for a few years. She began attending Catholic services with him, and then they began raising the children in that church. All three of her children made their first communions in the Catholic church, and her daughter also took the sacrament of confirmation in the Catholic church. "At home, everybody goes to some sort of church, unless they are a real rebel," Angela explained. "Here [in New York], if you go to church, you are like a rebel." She said she has been attending Unity church services almost since she moved to New York. She said she first heard of that church through a cousin, and so she "went and felt comfortable and stayed."

Angela hesitated and almost seemed at a loss for words when I asked her to talk about growing up outside the family, but then she smiled and said,

Oh, one of my aunt's was a dancer, a choreographer, so that was something we did outside the family. She was the head of a national dance group. You know when you are little and when you dance you use a bar, you reach down to the bar. But my hand was always reaching up to the bar, that's how little I was. So I would go by my aunt's and we would go dancing.

After one of her two older sisters chose to pursue a career as a professional dancer instead of attending college, Angela's mother would not allow her to take anymore dance lessons.

I was supposed to start ballet, but according to my mother education came first and she wasn't pleased that my oldest sister did not continue her education because she wanted to be part of my aunt's dance troupe. My mother said, "One girl give up education 'cause she shake she tail, nobody else. Everybody else is staying in school." And that was the end of "shaking she tail" for me.

Angela said she always considered herself blessed throughout her life in Trinidad, and she never had any desire to immigrate to the United States in the summer of 2001, when representatives from New York City's public school's held a recruitment fair at the Hilton Port of Spain. She said she only went along to the fair to keep her friend company, with no plans to apply for one of the jobs for herself. However, while she was sitting in the lobby waiting her

friend to finish her application and interview, a recruiter approached her and struck up a conversation. Learning that she was a special education teacher with 20 years of teaching experience and a host of other impressive credentials, the recruiter immediately persuaded her to participate in an impromptu interview and then offered her a contract to come teach in New York.

“I thought about my children,” Angela said, “I thought about the opportunities for their education, and I thought about my younger son’s health problems.” Angela’s older children, then 16 and 19, wanted to pursue higher studies that were unavailable in Trinidad at that time, her older son wanting to study architecture and her daughter wanting to specialize in culinary arts. Her younger son, nine at the time, had suffered from the age of six or seven from crippling migraine headaches that may or may not have been in some way related to the blindness in his right eye. “I knew there were more schools in New York, and more doctors. I thought this would be good for all of them.” When Angela brought the contract home that night and showed it to her children, the three of them did not hesitate; they definitely wanted to go. Her husband, however, said nothing, and she said this did not surprise her because the two of them had ceased speaking to one another a few years earlier. Although she made all of the necessary arrangements for all five of them to make the trip to New York, her husband chose to stay behind, and she said she is glad now in retrospect: “He could not have worked here, I did not have that kind of visa. What is that like for a man, to have to ask his wife every day for metro fare? I think he was happier staying [at home in Trinidad].” The two of them divorced amicably a few years later.

Upon their arrival in New York in mid-August of 2001, Angela and her three children found that the school authorities had made no provisions for their accommodation.

I was surprised, because the recruiters at the Hilton had had us fill out forms, and I had said there would be at least four of us. But it turned out, if you came with one person, they would provide accommodation. More than that, you had to provide your own.

Angela recalled that a Jamaican human rights activist who was already working for the schools stepped forward at the end of the two weeks of orientation, stood on a bench and began telephoning Caribbeans all over Brooklyn and Queens seeking places for the newly arrived teachers to stay, and that many teachers found shelter that way. She recalled,

If someone could accommodate one person, or more than one person, she helped teachers find places that way. Teachers were sleeping on floors and in bathrooms, wherever they could. And they put us up until we were able to get a salary and get ourselves together.

Fortunately for Angela's family, they were able to stay in the attic of one of Angela's aunts in Brooklyn. "It was an uninsulated attic, but we were lucky that was not a cold winter," she recalled. The four of them moved into a nearby one bedroom apartment together the following year, and they continued to live together in that or another one bedroom until she bought her brownstone in 2010.

Angela's two older children did not enroll in school right away, because they had both completed their secondary studies already and they needed time to figure out how architectural college or culinary school would work in New York. Her younger son, Arthur, and she were both starting in the public schools at around the same time, her as an elementary special education teacher and him as a third grader at a school less than a block away from their attic home. The fifth day of the new school year, and the day that was supposed to be the first day for Arthur, was Tuesday, September 11, 2001.

When the Twin Towers fell, he was in school . . . My daughter wasn't in school, so she could go around the block and pick him up . . . It was my first week teaching in New York. The only way I knew how to get to school and back was through the trains. No trains were running. No busses came. And I had to get back home to my kids . . . The principal made sure the people who had cars were full up, so somebody gave me a lift.

They put me down [in her neighborhood] and said, “Just walk straight that way,” and after a while I recognized something and found my way home.

She said that after the schools were reopened a few days later, “Everything was changed. The whole security system was changed, and everybody was suspicious of everybody.”

Angela said she has often felt disappointed by the way the New York City public school authorities have treated her, and that due to her vulnerable visa status,

I really feel as if I'm in bondage. Because you have to watch how you walk, watch how you talk, watch how you do all these other things. And you know what the unfairness is? If a U.S. citizen comes to Trinidad, they will never be treated unfairly like that. I come up here, and I work in U.S. dollars. They go down to Trinidad, and they work in U.S. dollars. Do you understand? In Trinidad, I would never take this [this being the excessive demands made upon her at the high needs school where she teaches special education]. Here I was recruited to work in the United States, the beacon of human rights, and look at how I was treated? . . . The principal knew I didn't have my green card, so she put double the work on me. I have kindergarteners and first graders in my class, so I have to do two separate lesson plans and two separate programs. Anybody would refuse, but I can't because I don't have my green card . . . The principal calls me in and she asks me, “Do you trust me?” The hair stands up on the back of my neck and I say, “Yes.” What else can I say? And she says, “These children should be cutting and pasting.” I say, “Remember, these children are very slow. At the end of the day of cutting and pasting, there won't be enough time to do the assessment and curriculum and other activities that you need me to do. I don't have time to document all the information to put in your precious binder, just so you can say your students cut and paste.” But she said the cutting and pasting is more important, so I said, “Very good,” and I did cut and paste with my students all that day. And in the end I am doing double the work, because that same principal will come and ask me, “Where is the weekly assessment you're supposed to do? Where are all these other things you're supposed to do?” I will say, “I couldn't do those things, because I was too busy doing what you asked me to do.” But it really means that I go to bed at midnight every night and wake up at 4 a.m. every morning, just to make sure I get it all done. Every year the principal assigns the weakest children for me to work with, because she knows I can teach them and they will learn with me. I pride myself on turning around the most difficult children. I have been going to work 32 years as a special education teacher. And still I am waiting to hear every year if I will get a U.

Angela received her green card shortly after this interview, in the late spring of 2013. She said this meant, “First and foremost, I can cut away the fear of a U.” This U, or rating of unsatisfactory, is something many Caribbean teachers spoke of. Angela explained that before some successes won by the Broken Promises campaign under the auspices of the Association of

International Educators that Angela is vice president of, they were even more afraid of this U, because it meant their world permits would automatically be withdrawn, giving principals inordinate power over their teachers. In other words, the principals merely had to rate a teacher as unsatisfactory to not only force a teacher out of a particular job but also out of his or her legal status in the United States. “A U meant no job, no money, no way to pay rent, and therefore no way to stay in the U.S.A.,” Angela said. “The fear of a U meant that if you would like to correct the principal, or if something happens and you are wrongly accused, you cannot defend yourself.”

As glad as Angela was to get her green card after 12 years of service in the New York public schools, it came too late to be of use to two of her three children. Her oldest son gained his United States citizenship on his own a few years ago, but her other two children “aged out” of eligibility to qualify as dependents on their mother’s visa when they turned 21. Her daughter, Angela, now 28, and her son, Arthur, now 23, remain in the country as illegal aliens, although they originally entered the country legally. She said she feels bitter about this outcome, since she was recruited and retained by the New York public schools for her professional expertise, and yet it seems now that she and her children have been treated like unwanted intruders rather than invited guests to the country. “These are stateless youths,” Angela said of her two illegal alien children and others like them, adding, “This trip has cost me my head.”

Nevertheless, she said it has all been worth it, because all three of her children have taken advantage of higher educational opportunities in New York, and especially because her youngest child’s healthcare has improved. “For me, my son Arthur got excellent medical support here that we could not get at home in Trinidad,” she said, noting that there are well trained doctors in

Trinidad, but not necessarily with as many specializations as can be found in a place like New York City, and that the Trinidadian doctors had never been able to tell what was wrong with him.

Growing up in Trinidad, they couldn't even tell what was wrong, just that the scanners showed that his right eye was smaller than his left eye, and that there was pathological damage to the retina so that eye could not develop. This child was in excruciating pain . . . he spent most of his growing up years with a cold compress on his head because of the pain. He was taking 800 milligrams of Motrin every half hour just for pain. So when we came here the first thing we did before he entered school was a screening. He was able to get all sorts of medical attention here.

That included the regular attention of a pediatric neurologist, and physiotherapy to cope with the joint problems that had developed as a result of years inside hiding from the pounding Trinidadian sun. She said that at one point she was taking her son to seven different clinics all over New York, using all of her sick days and personal days for this purpose. She said that these efforts have paid off, as she has seen her son grow into a strong and healthy young adult, still subject to inexplicable and sometimes debilitating migraines, but otherwise functioning fully in the much-less-sunny New York climate.

“Me, I would come again, because of my son,” she said,

but I would advise other Caribbean teachers thinking of coming, I would say, “Get it in writing. Get something written in your hand, terms and conditions. Get something written to protect you, that you will be classified as a professional with a master's degree, and not like you only have a bachelor's degree, which is what happened to us. Because this is a place where all the people need all the rights, and where everybody talks about rights and where human rights are synonymous with the U.S.A. But if you don't have it in writing, you have no rights. And here is where the condition of being indentured comes in.” That is what I would warn other teachers.

Augustus Nestle,* age 31, the adult son of a recruited teacher. Interviewed in May, 2013, at his mother's home in Brownsville, Brooklyn. Age 31. Currently working as a sound engineer and an electrician, he also pursues various entrepreneurial sidelines, such as the “suitcase trade” form of import/export, and home security installations. Augustus, Angela's older son, said he has not participated in the immigration rights activities that have so

absorbed his younger brother, Arthur. “I think that this whole fighting for being part of the U.S. is kind of way unnecessary, the reason being we didn’t ask to come here,” Augustus said.

They wanted us. They wanted my mother. They wanted something to enhance their society, and enhance their teaching. To invite her here, and then to treat her like they did, I don’t really believe in that . . . So I have chosen not to express myself for the last few years [about immigration rights].

[Augustus himself gained his U.S. citizenship several years ago, by marriage.]

He said he has chosen instead to try to help his mother in other ways. “Mom, fighting with this whole teacher situation, comes home every day with her work. Literally, mentally, spiritually, and physically. This affects our whole household. And as me as the oldest one I try to keep in a calm way,” he said.

So as she gets home, I want to make sure that she has somebody maybe just to yap at, because the younger ones don’t understand what she goes through during the day and why it is she comes home not with this anger, but with this stress. Stress leads to a lot of stuff. They don’t understand that. That’s why I try to just makes jokes, distract her, tickle her, make her feel that everything is going to be all right. I never have a negative situation, she always comes home, “Adda, adda, adda,” I’m like, “Everything’ll be all right.”

Augustus was just 19 when he came to New York with his mother Angela at the end of August, 2001. Born in 1981, he said he felt like he had already built a substantial and satisfying adult lifestyle for himself in Trinidad when he chose to accompany his family to New York in support of his mother’s recruitment. “I was already based, school based, education based, work based, lifestyle based. Everything was based,” he said.

Really I just dropped all of that and sacrificed to have that contract for my mom. For her to have that contract and everything here. So I mean the first month I came here I wanted to go back home. Because it just wasn’t me. I just felt like at the age of 18, 19 years old, you build something from the age of 14, and you were successful, to leave a successful situation, to come to another country to build something new, if you don’t know, so it was kind of difficult for me. But going back and forth to Trinidad, I had to really understand what my mom was doing for us. She was, so I tell myself, but she did that for me so much, that she wanted to do something for us. I literally tell myself I’m going to stay and make things happen, sacrifice a lot.

Augustus said he knows he attended a private preschool in Trinidad, but he does not really remember it. His earliest school memory is from the first day of grade one at Arouca Boys R.C. [Roman Catholic].

I remember Miss Ligu, our teacher. I was pretty shy, I was not really, never really a shouting guy . . . Obviously the first day of school, you don't really know anybody . . . I mean, I had friends, but I used to get bullied a lot. From grade one to grade three, I was bullied a lot. I was really miserable . . . From four to five, I rebelled really bad, against that.

Starting from grade four, Augustus said he became more aggressive towards his classmates who had formerly bullied him in grades one through three. He said he began to think of himself as a kind of champion of the underdog, standing up for himself and for other children who were being bullied. "I stood up to all of them, and even the ones who had been bullying me realized that I wasn't having it. My mouthpiece came out, and I spoke for everybody. I ended up a class clown." He said this clowning behavior resulted in many visits to the school by his parents, and many "licks" from both his teachers and his parents. "In the Caribbean, we tend to manage our kids, you know," he said, adding,

a little slap in the hand, a slap in the head. You know. And in primary school, the teachers used to get tree whips and stuff. That's what our penalty was when we did something, tree branches. I used to get a lot of licks.

More interested in clowning around and socializing than in studying, Augustus said that "focusing on the education was not really a hundred percent my interest. I was bright, but I was lazy with it." He said that although he used to pass all of his exams, he usually did so just barely, and his teachers often told his parents that he was "a good guy who needs to focus more on his education." At the end of primary school when he took the CXE, the exam to leave primary school and go to secondary school, his scores were as usual adequate but unspectacular. This meant he was only eligible to go to a junior secondary school, rather than straight to a secondary

school, which is where the higher scoring students could go. He said one of his teachers at Arouca Boys R.C. encouraged him to repeat a year there and re-take the exam to try for better results the following year, but Augustus said he just wanted to “get out and move forward.” Accordingly, the following year he matriculated at Mount Hope Junior Secondary School, a school he described as “pretty bad, with a pretty bad reputation, a reputation for a lot of fights and that.”

Augustus recalled his years in “junior sec” as a particularly happy time of life when he spent large amounts of time with his many friends, and with his father. He had three best friends whom he still feels close to today, two of whom have remained in Trinidad, and one of whom lives near him now in New York. “We were the four Musketeers,” he said, but he said he felt closest to his dad: “I grew pretty fast, because of my dad,” he said.

My father’s a d.j., and I loved that d.j., and I learned that work, and it’s my life now. He was also an electrician. He could have fixed anything, from fridge to stove to TV, even cars, anything electrical, he could fix it. And I took that knowledge and I have it now. My dad was like my homeboy. And due to when he had to go play to parties, he took me. Being around adults and that kind of society . . . my maturity was way too fast for my society, for my surroundings.

Identifying so strongly with his father and his father’s friends, Augustus said he wanted to spend more and more time with them, and to be more and more like them. For him, that meant acting like an adult, and to his way of thinking, adults work. He said that is why he began earning money from such a young age.

Augustus first steadily paying job, in addition to his d.j. work with his father, was painting wrought iron gates for his uncle who was a welder. “As soon as they finished the gates, I used to come prime, paint and clean them. I made a couple of bucks, from about age fifteen.” He said he also got more involved in sports, playing for the Mount Hope Soccer Team, and his interest in art and drawing grew, along with his interests in history and math. After completing

his studies at Mount Hope Junior Sec, he went on to St. Augustine R.C. [Roman Catholic] Secondary School,

and that's where my life started to be really good. I actually enjoyed going to that school . . . It was really an enhancement, and the surroundings were supportive, not just to lime. My friends and I were always in the library at that school.

These were the same friends he had grown up with in the same neighborhood and had been friends with since grade one.

Augustus remembered this as a very busy, very happy time of his life:

Going to school Monday to Friday, and getting involved in a lot of stuff, and still going with my dad when I finished work on a weekend. So on a Saturday when I was done with welding, I would go home, get dressed, help him pack the van with the d.j. equipment, and come home two or three in the morning, offloading the speakers again. Sunday, I had to get up and go to church with my mom, because she needed me, too. Have to get up at 8 o'clock, have to go to church, as much as I was tired, my mom needed me, and I was part of the church, too. The Catholic Church. I was in the youth group, and then I joined Bethel, a Pentecostal church.

After passing his secondary school leaving exams, Augustus went on to a private school for computer repair maintenance. He earned a credential there, and then enrolled in a computer medical diagnostics program. Around this time his grandfather, his mother's father, who had been an architectural draftsman, died. At the funeral, his boss approached Augustus and offered him a job in his architectural firm, which Augustus promptly accepted. He said that his friend who worked with him then is now the boss of that firm, and he wonders what might have happened there had he not chosen to immigrate to New York. At the same time, he was also working on offshore rigging for Amoco Oil, a very well paid job his uncle the welder had arranged for him.

Augustus said his mother grew more and more concerned about his lifestyle, because she said he was too young for his "fast" lifestyle. He countered that he felt since he was earning money like an adult, he should be allowed to behave like one, with late nights and all the rest,

like his father. “I felt, you know, that if I was going to two, three o’clock in the morning, coming home late from parties with my dad, why couldn’t I go with my friends doing that, without any problems.” At the same time, he said he also knew that “in the Caribbean family lifestyle, as long as you are under your parents’ roof, you respect their rules.” He said his parents used to fight about this often, with his mother repeatedly asking his father to intervene and reign him in, and his father adamantly refusing to do so. “My dad is pretty laid back, that’s just what he does, who he is,” Augustus explained. “That just would not be like him to sit me down and tell me what to do.” He recalled that this eventually led to his parents refusing to speak to one another for the last 3 or 4 years that they lived together in Trinidad. They often put him in the middle: “Hey, Dad, Mommy say if you could get this done. Hey, Mom, Daddy say if you could do this. I was, plus dealing with my sister and my brother, I look out for everybody.” He said that he blames himself almost entirely for his parents’ eventual divorce:

I was pretty ignorant. I had an attitude problem. I always think I’m right. I want the last say. How I grew up, that was my mentality, because I always thought I could get what I want, because I worked for it . . . I always felt like I was the one to blame for the breakup. I still live with it.

Augustus said that he understands his parents’ perspectives better now that he is a fully grown man and a parent himself:

Now I see more how I’m like my father. But then it didn’t add up for me, what he really was coming from and how he felt as a person. Because now I see he did the same for his family. His sacrificed his schooling to go work, and he sent all his sisters to the United States, bought the tickets and they came to the United States. He didn’t have no junior sec. My dad left primary school to go work to help his sisters to go to school.”

Growing up inside the family was a happy time as Augustus recalls it:

We grew up really really close, family close, always family, family always come first. My dad taught us that, that family always come first. My mom, same here. We always lived together. We had that, no matter what, we had to make sure that we watched each other’s back. Because we could fight against each other, but at the end of the day, we had to have each other’s back. And me and my sister we was like Bonnie and Clyde. Love my

sister to death. Love my sister to death. We went to the same school together, I always made sure that she was okay. I always had her back, and she always had my back. Always. If ever there were problems, she always knew she could call me up. Bread and butter. And then Arthur came along. He was like my little eyeball. Always wanted to be up with me, he was into the Legos and all that, a lot of the same things I used to like, that was nice. And then you know me and my sister growing up she went to same primary school, Mount Hope and Augustine, and we went to preschool together, so I had her back.

When Angela surprised her family one day with the announcement that she had been offered a contract to teach in New York City, Augustus remembered that she invited all of them to weigh in on the decision. “She came home, sat us down, and told us what happened that day,” he said.

She had not been planning to interview [at the recruitment fair held at the Port of Spain Hilton], she just went there with a friend. But someone asked her to interview, and once they saw her background and her degrees, they said, “You need to be on this boat!” They took her right away. So she asked us, how did we feel, did we want to go . . . I told her you need to do what’s best for all three kids. Arthur had his eye problem. I wanted to do the architecture. And my sister wanted to do her culinary arts . . . So we saw opportunities for all three of us. My mom is all about opportunities for her kids. She is all for her kids. So we decided to go.

“When we got the contract [for his mother to go teach in New York], I gave him [his father] the contract, he didn’t look at it,” Augustus said, adding,

There are things that she [his mother] don’t know. Before we left, for the first time, I told my dad I love him. And I would really like you to be there with us, I said that. And he never spoke to me. He never said anything about it. I never told my mother this. It hurt. It hurt that how I knew my family, how I knew it was, when we laughed together. How I missed everybody on the couch, watching news. I miss that, you know, because I always from day one and to this day, I always think about family first. I always try to make sure that everybody is okay no matter what. So I think that is one of my anger situations that I have, I hate to see family downgrade each other. It tears me apart, and now the problem I had was my expression. I don’t express it like how I’m talking to you now. They never used to see beyond my trip. They see the trip and they look at me as an alien, but they don’t see the reason why I trip . . . I want to look out for them.

Augustus said that his mother, Angela made all the necessary arrangements for his father to join them in New York, in case he ever decided to do so, but he never did. “We did all the paperwork for my dad, all he was supposed to do was go to the embassy, all paid for, but he

chose not to go.” Angela and her husband divorced a few years after she and her three children moved to New York. All three of his children speak of him with respect and gentleness, and the two who have remained in the United States illegally speak wistfully of their desire to see their father again.

After moving to New York, Augustus recalled that his mother began her job right away, and his younger brother Arthur enrolled in a nearby public middle school. His sister stayed home for a while before she was able to figure out how to enroll in culinary school, and he himself began working at odd jobs, like moving furniture, and he also completed an online associate’s degree in architecture. After that, he completed a diploma in sound engineering, which is related to his work as a d.j., his main profession today. He also completed further studies in electrical engineering, but he never earned a bachelor’s degree. “I could never get a chance to finish my bachelor’s degree . . . I feel like I sacrificed my lifestyle and my education to be here, because I had to make sure that everybody was all right,” Augustus said, “and to be honest with you, I have never got over that yet, it’s still stuck with me, that wondering, ‘What if I had stayed in Trinidad?’”

Augustus said that he is a very spiritual person, and that he prays and attends church services regularly. He said that he was raised in the Roman Catholic Church, his father’s faith, and that his mother made sure that he attended Sunday School regularly when he was a little boy. He said that he was also exposed to a variety of other religions growing up, though, mostly because his father had so many relatives with so many different religions, including

Catholic, Christian, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Baptists, Hindus, Muslims, and Pentecostals. On top of that, my grandfather was in a lodge, so with all of that, I had exposure to all kinds of religion and different kinds of thinking. At the end, I choose to be a child of God, rather than to be part of a religion, because each religion has its truth and its negative points.

He said he likes to attend Sunday services at a large multid denominational Christian church on Flatbush Avenue when he can find the time; and when he can't, he listens to an online service. Echoing his mother, he said, "I like to have that every Sunday. I have to have at least an hour service."

Augustus, 31 years old when I interviewed him, has been married and divorced twice, and he has a 6-year-old daughter by his second wife. He met his first wife while he was in college in Trinidad, and he returned to Trinidad to marry her shortly after immigrating to New York with his mother and siblings. They settled into a long distance marriage, him living with his mother in New York and pursuing his technical studies, and her living with his father in Trinidad and attending a teachers' college, which he and his mother paid for. He said that in retrospect, he feels the marriage was more her family's idea than his idea or hers. He said he knew he wanted to be with her, but he did not want to get married so early. "The marriage broke up our relationship . . . Marriage is like a funeral to me, or like a procedure," he said. "I felt I was really forced . . . We are cool now. We are best of friends. We talk online, we laugh . . . I guess we have those memories together."

They divorced about a year after they got married, when he was 20 years old. Around the same time, he met his second wife:

I was at the verge of not being in the country. I was getting frustrated. My last semester of college I met this girl, my daughter's mother, she's from Trinidad but had been living here. We were cool. I was not working at that time. She was going to school and working . . . I told her my paperwork was almost up [because he was about to turn 21 and "age out" as his mother's visa dependent], and I didn't want to be illegal. The time I spent around illegals, I never lived like that and I didn't want to. I don't want anybody telling what to do . . . So this girl, one morning she called and she said, "Hey, you, want to get married?" She had her citizenship. I said, "Yeah, I want to marry you." . . . I did love her. And she loved me. She loved me.

Augustus and his second wife kept their marriage a secret from their families for a long time, each one remaining in their parent's homes while continuing to date one another. He told

his mother his employer at that time had offered him work visa sponsorship, and he said she seemed to believe that for at least the first couple of years. Three years into the marriage, when his wife became pregnant with their daughter, he told his mother they had been married all along. This also meant he would soon be eligible for U.S. citizenship, which he soon after acquired. Augustus said that, like with his first marriage, he felt that pressures from his wife's family tended to drive them apart, and that their objections drove them apart when their child was about a year old.

“My daughter is six now,” Augustus said, smiling at the thought of her.

She is amazing. When she was born, that's when my whole life started to change around. I tell anybody, any man, I tell him, you having a child and you seeing the birth, as much as you could be the strongest, stupidest man in the world, that moment could change you like [snaps his fingers], seeing that birth. I love my daughter. My daughter is still one of the reasons I work so hard now, because I want when my daughter really do need me I should be there for her . . . I really want to move home [to Trinidad], but I'm talking about when she needs me, I want to be here [in New York] for her.

Augustus and his daughter's mother have chosen to send the girl to a private school near their Brooklyn home with other Caribbean-descended children and teachers, eschewing the New York public schools as “too wild.”

The New York public schools did not make a positive impression on Augustus. Although he never had to attend them himself, because he was already 19 and the equivalent of at least a high school graduate when he arrived, he learned about them through his mother's experience as a teacher and his brother's experience as a student from grades three through twelve. “I hate it,” he said,

I dislike the whole [public] education culture here. It makes no sense. It's a day care for kids, that's all it is. Teachers try hard to change that daycare behavior, but the system is totally messed up. It's like a waiting room until college.

Augustus also said he has seen what a terrible toll teaching in the New York public schools has taken on his mother and by extension on his younger siblings. “She was not around for my younger sister and brother when she came here,” he said.

I mean mentally. Her main focus was teaching and dealing with the kids in her school. When she came home, she was too tired to deal with anything at home . . . That was time she needed to be with them and let them know she was there. They were at the edge of understanding life. I could not teach them, they would not listen to me. But it was messed up, because her job was so hard, so stressful, all she could think about was work.

Augustus said that his brother and sister were not the only people the New York public schools effectively took her away from. He said he still believes that, had they not moved, his parents would have worked through their differences and reunited. He also said that one of Angela’s sisters would also be happier, because the two of them had been especially close. And he said her former students in Trinidad suffered, too, because her departure

really devastated her school. She was in charge of a lot of things there. The love she had at home [in Trinidad] for her work, that is what is missing here [in New York]. She wants to do that here, but she would not get the affection here, because people here don’t respect your feelings. That is one of the things that is missed. Going to see my mom in her school there, and seeing her smile, and everyone home saying your mom is so nice. Going to her school here, no. Not that much respect. No way you get that respect here. You have people you work with and they don’t even smile at you. That’s ridiculous.

Asked if he has any advice for other Caribbean teachers and their families who are thinking of following in the Nestle’s footsteps, Augustus said,

Stay home. Stay home. Stay home or have a Plan B, because in this country, Plan A is never a go. Have a Plan C, too. You have to. Because if you don’t, if you do not have a strong mind or a mentality to adapt or the right help to be pushed when things happen, or the right help to lean back on when you need to, this is not the place for you . . . I would not advise the move.

Augustus said he stays in America now because he still wants to help his family, and to be here for his daughter. “I want to go home, I want to really, really bad,” he said.

Maybe one day I will. It would still be ideal to me, to live in Trinidad again. I don’t want to live the American Dream, because that is all it is, it’s a dream. You go to school, go to

college, work hard, save your money, fall in love, get married, get kids. The American Dream, the picket fence, it's a dream. That's why they call it the American Dream. Listen to the words, how rich people and how people who are making money and making their life because of us, our dreams are their lifestyle. You understand. What we have here is a dream. So you work all day, and you go to bed, and you sleep and you dream. That's the American Dream. You dream it. You are not going to live it.

Angel Nestle,* 28, interviewed via telephone and Skype on three occasions in June, 2013. She is currently residing in New York out of legal status, working “under the table” in the catering industry, pursuing her passion for pastry, and raising her son. When I interviewed Angel Nestle, she and her 9-year-old son were staying at the home of her mother, Angela Nestle, in Brownsville, Brooklyn. They had returned there recently, after spending a couple of years in another state with Angel's boyfriend. When we spoke, she was not sure if they would remain in New York or not. Angela's only daughter and middle child, she came to New York with her mother and brothers in early September, 2001. Since that time, she has earned an associate's degree in restaurant management from the Art Institute of New York, and she also has two culinary certificates, including one in pastry, which is her specialty.

Angel said one thing she likes about spending time at her mother's home in Brooklyn is that it gives her a chance to spend time with old friends, many of whom she has known since her childhood in Trinidad. Asked about her earliest school memory, Angel said,

It's so funny, because my friend from primary school, a friend I went through standards one, two and three with, she just came last week to visit me here. I have a memory of when we first met, and I remember knowing her from primary or elementary school to middle school and high school. I remember when I first saw her she was crying, because standard one is the first time you're on your own. I remember we had a teacher who wore sneakers with stockings, we used to notice that and talk about it, and we always remembered that. As we became older, we did dances and skits and plays together, but I didn't even remember half of this, when my friend came to visit last week, she remembered and she told me, and then I remembered. We used to do Christmas plays and African plays. We used to play netball, which is like basketball for girls in Trinidad. This friend lived in Trinidad until 2 years ago, when she went to Canada to study. And I saw her just last week.

Angel's elementary or primary school was a girls' school called St. Finbar Girls RC, a Roman Catholic school founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph Cluny. She recalled that there was a convent next door and a church across the street, and she said she attended there for grades one through five. After that, she went like her brothers before and after her to two secular schools, Mount Hope Secondary School, and then St. Augustin (High) School, where she completed her secondary education and graduated with the Trinidadian equivalent of a high school diploma at the usual age of 16, just before her mother was offered the job in New York.

"When I graduated from secondary school, just before we came to the U.S., I wanted to go to London, England to study culinary arts," Angel remembered, adding,

But Mom came and told us about this package in New York, this offer. They wanted to recruit Caribbean teachers, and Mom came to us with this brochure and everything. The recruiters had told her they had stuff in place for us when we got here [to New York]. We would not have come if they did not offer to help us as much as they did.

Angel recalled that the type of help they were offered and expected included help with finding suitable housing, settling into the new city, and applying for green cards.

"We talked it over as a family, and we wanted to come for many reasons," Angel said.

I could not study to be a chef in Trinidad, not really. They only had hospitality management there, not chef's schools, so I wanted to come to New York for that. My brother Arthur was having migraines, the doctors in Trinidad could not help him any more than they had, so we wanted to come to New York for him. We thought it would be better for him here [in New York], with better medical care. But we all had one thing in common: It was a family decision and we wanted to come. Now that I am more grown up, I see that this was more for us than for my mom. It was not for her. This was not her dream. She had built a good life for herself in Trinidad, but she saw opportunities for us, she wanted that for us.

Angel also said that she now sees that her mother's decision to leave must have been very hard for her, and hard on her former students in Trinidad, too:

I believe my mom's students miss her. She did a lot of good things. She taught them how to ride horses and she took them to compete in the Special Olympics. All of that has died down now that she is not there to do it.

“Now I think that brochure [from the New York City schools] was vague,” Angel said, adding,

I remember they promised us we could get visas and Mom could eventually get a green card, then put us on her green card. But Mom's green card just came through last week [11 years after they moved to New York, and too late for Angel]. They also promised us they would help us find housing, and that was not the case. It all happened so fast, there were no places for us to stay when we got here. We had to stay with cousins, and we ended up spending more than one year living in our cousin's attic. I remember we spent two Christmases there until we were able to get our own [one bedroom] apartment.

Angel said that she and her mother were also unpleasantly surprised by the steep “international student” fees she had to pay in order to continue her education, fees much higher than they had expected as invited legal immigrants. “When we got here, we started trying to find a culinary school for me, and we found out I could not get any financial aid,” Angel said, adding,

Mom had to pay out of her pocket. All of that was out of her pocket, out of her hard work, her career. I am so grateful. Her career, it is a blessing. I wanted to specialize in French cooking, but I couldn't afford the French culinary school, it was more expensive, so I went to the Art Institute. It was hard and confusing, figuring out how to get into college here and how to pay for it, so I didn't start right away. It took us a while to figure it out. My mom paid for everything. First I did a 9 month culinary arts program, then I did a management degree, an associate's degree in culinary management, and that took 2 years. That was around the time when I had my son, in September, 2006, so I was also in transition with that, going to school and taking care of him. I did a lot of odds and ends jobs. Most of the classes were at night, and we moved to our second apartment then.

When Angel was 21 and her son was two, she “aged out” of eligibility to remain in the U.S. legally as a dependent on the H visa that her mother had at that time. Seeking to remain legally compliant, and also to continue her culinary studies, she returned to Trinidad and from there applied for a J visa. This is a kind of student visa that can be used for technical studies. She said that her school was not at first recognized by the government authorities as one eligible to administer J visas, so it took several months for her visa to come through and for her and her son to be eligible to return legally to New York. Once they did, she returned to her mother's house (still a one bedroom apartment at that time), and continued her studies.

“I had been trying to find my calling, and I found it: Pastry,” Angel said.

An externship was required, and I worked at a bakery in Manhattan, a restaurant and dessert baker, and it was the most fun I ever had. The boss liked me and gave me lots of challenges and responsibilities. I evolved and learned a lot. I think he would have hired me. I couldn't stay and work after the externship was over, though. After I finished there, and finished with the pastry certificate, my J visa was finished and it was time to go back home. But I couldn't go. It was too much for my son, to uproot him and take him away from everyone and everything he knew here. So it was bittersweet when I finished my pastry certificate, because I had found my calling, but then I could not work at it. That was in late summer 2007 or 2008, and I have been out of status since then.

Angel said that in New York, “You always know somebody who knows somebody, and you can bake cakes and find work,” but she had been more isolated since she moved south to live with her boyfriend 2 years earlier.

“My son was going into the second grade when we moved,” Angel said, adding,

We enrolled him in a nice elementary school in a college town. That school was so nice, not like the one in Brownsville [Brooklyn] where he went before. That school was like a cage. The one in [the college town] felt so free. The kids could look out the windows and doors, they could look outside, wherever they were. Each grade had its own playground . . . The one in Brownsville was on the next block from my mom's house, and it was just caged in . . . I chose to sacrifice my social life in New York, because [the southern college town] was a lot more open for him to be raised [there]. The parents were more open to supporting the kids . . . It was a great school for my son.

After 2 years there, though, Angel moved back in with her mother in the summer of 2013, because she was unsure about her relationship with her boyfriend, about whether it was going to work out.

Angel described her boyfriend as a Trinidadian man close to her own age who had grown up in the same neighborhood as her and then moved to the American south on a college football scholarship, the same as all his brothers. She said that after graduation, he had stayed to work, and had gotten his green card early in the summer of 2013. She said they had gotten together through a mutual Facebook friend, and had been together for about 5 years, during which time he worked to “take care of his family back home, and make sure they all got through college.” This

high degree of concern for helping the family of origin was something I noticed repeatedly expressed by the Caribbean men I spoke with or heard about throughout this research project.

Angel said that once she and her son moved in with her boyfriend in the southern college town, she felt isolated in many ways. She said she felt like she had left all of her friends and work connections behind in New York, and so she was left with only her boyfriends' friends to socialize or find work with. In addition, she said she also struggled to find a church where they could fit in, but that they never really did find one there. "We grew up in the Catholic church, because our father is Catholic, although I don't remember him ever going to church" she said. "My mom pushed me more as a female, to go to church, and I did my confirmation. My older brother didn't have to." Angel said that it had been hard to find a Roman Catholic church that "felt like home" in New York, and even harder to find one in the south, where

everyone was Baptist. Religion is just a little bit different in the south. I felt my son and I were always welcome at my mom's New York church, the Unity Pyramid of Truth . . . but I never found anything like that in the south. I teach my son some stuff at home, though. I give him a Bible and teach him what I learned. When we go back to New York, everyone at the Pyramid of Truth is always so happy to see us. They say, "Oh, look how he's grown!"

Angel said she wished she could bring her son home to spend time with his grandfather, her father, in Trinidad. Being out of legal status, that is not possible for her.

Dad loses out. He can't see his grandson . . . and my cousins all have kids now, and we can't spend time with them, either. Our dad's getting older, and I think about him, and I worry that anything could happen to him, but I can't see him if I want to . . . My friends back home ask when I am coming to visit, but I can't. My son was two the last time I went home.

Angel said that she still daydreams about moving back to her home country, and that she probably would have by now, were it not for her son and what she considers to be his best interests. Having experienced a youthful international immigration herself, she said it is not something she would choose for her son. "It was confusing and scary. The people were different.

I got made fun of for my accent. It was pretty much scary . . . I had a kid while I was promised I would have a life here,” she explained.

Now things are not working out and we have our two lives here. It would be unfair to my son for me to move back to Trinidad now. He’s doing well in school. Now I need to educate him, that is the first priority.

Asked if she has any advice for other teachers who might be considering making the same kind of move her mother did, Angel said that the most important thing is to make sure that the offer is “legitimate,” and to get everything in writing. “I mean everything,” she emphasized,

get it in writing. Make sure everything is in place. The fine print is important. Keep on it. Go first by yourself, then bring your kids after you make sure it is legitimate. Don’t bring your kids until you have got all the right paperwork in place, because you don’t want them stranded here out of status like me.

Arthur Nestle,* interviewed in May, 2013, at The Black Institute in Manhattan, where he also heads the International Youth Association as an award-winning immigration rights activist. I interviewed Arthur Nestle, 21, at The Black Institute in Manhattan, where he works as an intern, and at his mother’s house in Brooklyn, in May, 2013. Out of legal status, he currently works as a political activist for immigrant rights, especially those of the adult children of New York City’s Caribbean teachers.

“Every part of my story always starts off with a girl,” Arthur said in response to my first question about his earliest school memory.

In kindergarten, there were three girls in my class. Each one had different features, and they all ended up being my close friends . . . I remember graduating from kindergarten, because I got to put on a shirt and tie . . . but I was so mad because my mother lent my good purple tie to one of my friends. So you have probably seen the pictures of me on that day [Yes, I have.], and I look so mad [Yes, he does.].

Aside from the purple tie incident, Arthur said that his memories of kindergarten were happy ones, “fun in the sun, I guess. It was very, very hot, but school was just fun.”

As Arthur tells it, his school life was off to an idyllic start until one fateful day when he was about 6 years old, near the start of first grade. He recalled that the week before, his mother had given his then 16-year-old brother a hundred Trinidadian dollars [about US\$15.58 as of June, 2013], with instructions to buy him a much-needed new pair of school shoes. “My brother bought me a cheap pair of shoes, like some church shoes, to go to school with,” Arthur said.

I used to hate tying my shoelaces, and no one in my family ever taught me how to tie my shoelaces, so I guess they came untied. I was always the kind of person with my hand way up if I knew what the answer was, saying, “Please pick me, pick me, pick me!” So I had gone up to the board to give an answer, and I was coming away from the board, I remember I was excited because I got the right answer, but my shoelaces were untied, and one foot stepped on the other foot, and I slipped and hit the side of my head. I think you can still see the scar here [on his right side of his face, near his blind eye]. And I got up, for some reason I didn’t feel anything, and there was just blood everywhere . . . The school nurse just put some cotton swabs and a wrap over it, and I went home that night and my mom, just being the cautious mother that she is, went across the street to one of her nurse friends and she said, “Could you just check my son, you know he hit his head today, could you just check to see?” And the nurse comes and, she was a close family friend, she said, “He could die if he goes to sleep tonight. He could bleed out.” And that moment she drove us straight to the hospital. And that is actually the last moments I remember my mother and my father still talking to each other, although my mom says he was never there. Memory is weird sometimes.

Arthur said he never screamed or cried while he got three stitches in his head. A few weeks after this injury, his teacher told his mother that she had noticed that when he started reading his head was almost always tilted to the left. Angela took him for an eye test, and that is when they realized he was almost completely blind in his right eye. Not long after that, when he was 7 years old, Arthur began suffering the excruciating migraine headaches that have hampered him ever since.

Even today, all the doctors say the same thing. The blind eye, and the damage done to the side of my head, and my migraine headaches, none of it is connected. They did CAT scans and MRIs and all of that, and they say even though it is a correlation, it might not have been a causation. I don’t know if I could see in that eye or not before that, but I know I started getting the migraines after, when I was 7.

After kindergarten, Arthur followed his brother Augustus and his sister Angel to Arouca R.C. [Roman Catholic] Primary School. “My mother was very deeply religious,” he said, adding,

My mother was an Anglican, and my father was a Roman Catholic, but she believed that at the end of the day we still believe in Jesus Christ, so she went along and made all her kids go to Catholicism . . . We had all boys in school, and we wore khaki pants with baby blue shirts. I always liked dressing up . . . On the first day of school, I had my Power Rangers lunch box, it was red . . . There are pictures of that, too, pictures of me every step of my life . . . School was always just extremely fun for me.

Arthur said he always loved to attend school every day until the migraines began at age 7. After that, he began going to school less and less, and then to make matters worse, his teacher left to come to the United States, so his class was left without a teacher for the rest of that year. “There was no sub, so the teachers in the class ahead or behind us, second and fourth grade, would step in sometimes to make sure we weren't doing anything [bad]. I remember clearly that for most of that time, there was nobody there. And then my mother came to school and she realized that they couldn't afford or they couldn't find anybody, and she switched me off to the government school, Arouca Government Primary School.”

“I was about 8 years old then, and it was so exciting to be with boys and girls again,” Arthur said.

I hadn't been with girls since kindergarten. That was fun, to say the least . . . Having girls around, you know, every day I used to come home with a new letter from somebody, from different classes, I don't know what you would call them, love letters, I guess.

Although Arthur was having fun being in school with girls, he said that his migraines just grew worse and worse and made it increasingly hard for him to keep up in class. He said he also remembers getting sick whenever he tried to play outside in the sun, unable even to manage to play in the outfield without passing out or throwing up. “To this day, they still tease me that the grass in that park is brown where I threw up on it,” he said.

By the fifth grade, Arthur remembered that he was falling more and more behind in class and growing more and more worried about the test he was going to have to take before going to secondary school. “I was panicking. I was scared,” he said.

I never really told anybody this before you, but I was really scared to take that test, because that test tells what school you go into, and let me tell you, my brother and my sister, they both went into average schools. And those schools had a lot of violence and didn't have the best education, and I was scared that I was going to end up in the same exact school as them or even worse. And it's kind of like, I don't know what to compare it to up here in America, it's kind of like applying to college and you get into Yale and everyone says, “Oh my God, that is so great!” or you get into community college and everyone is like, “Ehh, not that great.” It's almost like everyone would judge you for the rest of your life based on that test that I was just about to take, and I was really scared. I never told anybody this, but when my mother came to the family and told us she's getting a job opportunity to come to the United States . . . I realized I had gotten the opportunity to escape that pressure, that stress . . . I remember this summer perfectly. I was going into the fifth grade and everyone was studying for this test, and I'm just like, “I'm going to New York City! I don't have to study for no test, I'm going to New York City.” And then to think we would go to New York City, people in Trinidad talk about NYC almost as if it is a safe haven, and when people come back from the states, everyone looks at them with respect. They are always so well dressed, so cared for. They say, oh you know, this and such person came back from foreign, like they call it. That's what they call it if you go, they call it foreign . . . So I was like YES! Yes, yes, yes, let me go!

Arthur remembered that the night of August 10th, going into August 11th was when they arrived in New York, with Alea songs playing on Hot 97 on the radio in the SUV that his “rich aunt” brought them home from the airport in. He said he had never seen so many lights:

That's the first thing I noticed, the lights everywhere. In Trinidad there would be one or two street lights, and that's all you see is the street lights. And here it's like the buildings are lit up. Even in the plane, coming down in the plane, you see the city lit up, the closer and closer you get to the city, the brighter everything gets. And it's like 10, 11 o'clock, and the kids are outside in the streets running, and they're like, race me, race me. They would race and then I was faster than them, and I'm like, man, in Trinidad, I'm like one of the slowest people in my class, and I'm faster than everyone here.

Arthur's sister Angel, who was 16 and spending most of her time at home when they first arrived in New York, took him over to the school nearest their aunt's house.

I would never forget the first day I went to go register for my new school. It was September 11, 2001 . . . We got up around 9 or 9:30ish, and we went to school to register

. . . This is Flatbush, 2001, which was not one of the greatest neighborhoods, to say the least. Lots of crime and whatnot, and this was not one of the greatest schools . . . As soon as we got there, they told us to go home. Like any kid, I was happy to have another free day off. So we went home and watched it on TV. I did not know if what I was seeing was the norm, something that always happens, or if this was something that would be monumental, or in between . . . And this is when it became surreal to me and I realized I was in New York City . . . Right out the window of the attic you could actually see the sky getting darker and darker and darker . . . and then I realized that watching TV. in Trinidad, everything always seemed a billion miles away, and for the first time in my life, I was seeing something that I was also seeing on TV., that actually took place right here, across a bridge from me.

Arthur said he was allowed to return to school two days later, on September 13, and right from the start, he felt “as if I was the brightest person in the class.” Despite having felt like he was falling further and further behind in Trinidad, and despite worrying that he might altogether fail his upcoming test for admittance to secondary school, in New York Arthur said that he found himself to be eminently well prepared to impress his teachers and classmates in every single subject. He first distinguished himself by displaying his knowledge of the times tables. “I’ll never forget Mr. Moore, big guy, he taught me so much, we just connected,” Arthur said.

He put up simple questions on the board, like three times three. I was like, ‘Me! Ask me!’ but he saw my enthusiasm, and he wouldn’t ask me. But he saw that no one else in the class knew their times tables . . . so he asked me my favorite times table, the six times. I went through that, even to 13, 14 and 15, and Mr. Moore was like, “They could learn a lot from you.” . . . I still don’t understand how they could not know their times tables when it’s all written up in the back of the books. It was ridiculous.

Arthur said he loved knowing all the answers, but he started to feel shy about raising his hand to answer after he realized that the other students were laughing uproariously at his Trinidadian accent.

He recalled that he was usually happy in his classes, but less happy at lunchtime, because that is when he used to get bullied. “I was skinny and frail, and some of the bad students did not like me,” he said. “In Trinidad they used to call me Fragile, they used to call me Bones, or TinTin, that’s like ‘thin thin’ without the H, with a Trinidadian accent. So I guess they picked on

me because I was smaller.” This lunchtime bullying continued through sixth grade and into seventh, when one of the girls bullying him turned into his girlfriend and the next thing Arthur knew, he was popular with all of the middle schoolers. He and the formerly bullying girl went to the eighth grade prom together: “I wore an all white suit with a black hat, you’ve probably seen the pictures.” [Yes, I have.]

Arthur went to Erasmus High School next, and he joined a school-within-a-school called STAR, for Science, Technology and Research. The idea, he said, was to separate the schools and make them smaller to stem the violence that was so prevalent at that time.

In middle school and in high school, too, they had police officers for security guards . . . To get into the school, you had to go through a scanner . . . backpack scanners, the beep beep things. So you go into Erasmus, you get searched, so I wasn’t able to have a cellphone in the school, which was a very scary feeling for me.

Arthur said that although he continued to find the coursework easy to master, he continued to miss many days of school as a result of his continuing migraine headaches.

I missed probably 30% of every school year because of my headaches, and it was always around the summer time, the beginning and the end of the school year . . . While everyone was studying and working their butts off, I didn’t have to study. The issue was when I started staying home with my headaches and the teachers started deducting points away for participation and homework. I did try, I started off doing homework, but it was so repetitive, and my grades were still high.

By tenth grade, Arthur found that his health problems and poor study habits caught up with him to the point where he actually began failing in his math class. At that point, his teachers and the principal suggested to his mother that homeschooling might be the best option for him, and both of them readily agreed.

“It was not a big deal [to be homeschooled],” Arthur said, adding,

Really, it was a piece of cake. I guess I got lucky again, because I got Miss Booey. She was the best lady, the best friend I ever had, and the best homeschool teacher out there. She was a grown woman who played video games with me, and just like all the other

teachers she always told me, “You are a brilliant kid,” and she helped me get my grades up high enough so that when it was time to start applying to college, I was okay.

Arthur said that Miss Booe judged him to be already very well prepared to do well on the New York State Regents exam, so instead of preparing for that, they spent time prepping him to take the SAT [Scholastic Achievement Test] for college.

Because he had done well on his PSATs at the start of eleventh grade, Penn State and Hoffstra University sent Arthur letters encouraging him to apply, but he said he did not want to go far or ask his mother to pay a high tuition for him. He said that he had watched her struggle to pay \$20,000 a semester for his sister’s culinary school, and he did not understand at that time that it was not so much that his sister had chosen an expensive school, but rather that she had to pay the international student fees. “Why go to a fancy school when I can get the same education for less nearer to me?” Arthur said, adding that he had hoped to enroll at Brooklyn College, but then learned he could not because his high school GPA [grade point average] was just a little too low. He enrolled at City Tech, instead. “It was fun, but the problem I had yet again was attendance, because of my migraines,” he said.

The higher you go, the more important attendance is, especially with classes meeting only two or three times a week, and sometimes just once a week . . . During the winter time, my grades are fine, but during the summertime, I was an F student.

Despite his uneven grades, Arthur said that his college teachers noticed his potential and encouraged him. “I’d ask a really good question that would make them realize I’m very macro,” he said. “I did good in math, science, history . . . but I wasn’t a great studier, and with my headaches, my GPA started dropping.” By this time, he was 20 years old, and he started to realize that when he turned 21, he might age out of his legal right to remain in the United States. In an effort to revive his GPA, he enrolled in a New Start Program at Kingsborough College, and an immigration lawyer at the New American Center there advised him to wait until right before

he turned 21 before applying for his international student visa. Right after his 21st birthday, he learned that his application had been denied and that he had 180 days to leave the country.

Basically, they were telling me I had to go back to Trinidad,” he recalled,

and I’m like, for what? . . . I feel like all my problems that I have today all generated from Trinidad, like the scar, constantly reminding me that I could have gone to sleep that night and died. And then all of a sudden I found out I couldn’t see in one eye. And then all of a sudden there I started getting the severe migraine headaches. And then being in America every time it would get hot, close to as hot as it would get in Trinidad, I would get so sick. . . From age seven to 23, I have been dealing with that pain. And there is no reason a 7-year-old boy would rather prefer death than life. No reason at all . . . Even now it is frustrating for me when people talk about it like it is a norm, that everyone goes through it. They don’t understand that it is something that shuts me down . . . So I couldn’t go back to Trinidad, where it all started, and where the sun was so hot . . . And to tell you the god’s honest truth, there was not even one percent of my body that wanted to go back.

Arthur did not go back. Instead he stayed, passing from legal to illegal status in the country he had called home since the age of 9. He started taking more interest in his mother’s work with the Association of International Educators, and he co-founded an affiliate organization for adult children of Caribbean teachers who had like himself “aged out” of legal status. In the ensuing 2 years, he has become more and more involved in the fight for immigration rights, and he has won numerous awards for his efforts from the City College of New York and other organizations. He still plans to become a United States citizen as soon as possible, and he wants to return to community college to complete the two or so additional classes he needs for his associates’ degree. After that, he said he would like to transfer to John Jay College to do a degree in criminology. “My mother wants to leave to go back to Trinidad, so she’s just like, ‘Get it done, get it done, get it done.’” Arthur said he also thinks he may need to go back to the hospital to try and figure out why his headaches are changing and why bolts of lightning seem to flash across his vision, seemingly splitting his brain in two with an almost unbearable searing pain. “I go back and get more tests, and they all say the same thing. They don’t see tumors. They don’t

see anything that could be causing it.” Although he said that Imitrex, Depacote, and experimental drugs have not relieved him of his migraines, he will keep going back to the hospital, “in case they may have missed something . . . Now I know it’s my eating habits, it’s my sleeping habits, it’s my body temperature and also stress that can cause the migraines.”

Arthur said that his mother twice tried intensive prayer interventions, or exorcisms of a sort, to help take away his migraine pain. “When I was young, I went to first communion, I went to Sunday School, I was really involved in church,” he said. “Whenever I come back from church, I always feel so inspired. And then I’d learn things in church, interpretations of the Bible, it’s so fundamental.” Being a devout believer, he did not question his mother’s decision to take him to a church in Trinidad for “heavy praying” over his migraines, but it did not relieve them. By the time they moved to New York, he was a little older and more aware when his mother took him to a church in Connecticut for what some people there were calling an “exorcism,” but he noted that it could not have been a “real” exorcism, because they had not procured an advance letter of approval from the Vatican. In any event, the procedure or ritual did not relieve his migraines.

Asked what advice he might offer to other Caribbean families thinking of immigrating the way his did, Arthur said,

When you get hung up in the technicalities, that’s when things go into disarray . . . The point of life is just to live. I’d like to write a book about this. Science is there so we as a human race could advance ourselves, and religion is a way to make us work together, to motivate us, and it’s not to make us think there is life after death . . . My brother and I agree on this, he is such a brilliant guy . . . We are only here from birth to death, that is the only thing we are sure about, and my mother would agree with us. When it comes to life, the point is just to live . . . But my goal is to make a difference. I’m only here for a certain period of time, and I want to leave it a better world than I found it.”

Sallie Baker,* a Jamaican elementary school teacher in her sixties, speaking at the private school in Brooklyn, New York, where she was at the time a volunteer teacher, May

17, 2013. Sallie Baker came to New York from Jamaica in 2001, after her children were grown and she had earned her full teacher's retirement, so she was less interested in talking about her life story and more interested in explaining her current employment crisis. She spoke with me in her sixth grade classroom at the Seventh Day Adventist Elementary School in Brooklyn, where she was volunteering as head teacher to "fill her time" while seeking resolution to her work visa problem. It is a large, traditional classroom in the early twentieth century style, with high ceilings and desks arranged in five rows of about six students each, about 30 kids in the class. This is their lunchtime, and the children have brought in their trays from elsewhere.

Sallie said that problems with the recruitment process were evident from as early as the initial orientation process in August, 2001. She said,

We were not given mentors or anything like that. At my school, I was told we had been teaching a long time so we would not need mentors. But we were shocked to see the difference in the type of behavior you know and it was more or less like a shock. To look at where we were coming from, the type of learning, the type of discipline, the whole process was different where we were coming from what we had to go into,

She suggested that more cross cultural advice and support would have been appropriate and probably welcomed by most of the new recruits.

Sallie said that she met the new challenges as best she could, following her principal's instructions and taking and passing all the necessary examinations to earn New York teaching certification. "We had to do all these examinations to be qualified so we did that. And it took some people a very long time. Having to get an evaluation from Albany, that took a long time," she explained, noting that frustration with the state education authorities was commonplace, because they were consistently very slow in responding to communications of any kind.

So after 3 years we were asked to stay on, to ask our country to give us a waiver to stay on, and we did that and we were put on H visa. We had come on a J visa, after 1 year it was extended another 2 years, and then after that we got the H.

Sallie added,

The Board sponsored our processing of the papers for our green card. But because Albany took a long time with paperwork, some of us could not put in our papers until 2006 or 2007. But we still continued working hoping that they would fulfill the promises that they made.

After 11 years of satisfactory teaching service for the same New York public elementary school, still working on an H visa and still waiting for her green card, Sallie ran afoul of first one new principal, and then another. “And in my situation, like many others, the principal comes and the situation arises where maybe they do not like you, or maybe you do not have that sort of rapport with them, and then they will definitely get on your case,” Sallie said, adding,

They will do all sort of things, even to the extent of lying in my case. And even when it was put to them vividly that this is not the case, it did not matter. If you were pressured and harassed in the classroom, you were given more criticism, you were written up even when the principal did not enter your room, you were written up anyway. So at one point my principal told me that the Department of Education was trying to get rid of the older teachers. I asked why, and I was told that it was because our salary can also be two of the new ones coming in.

Sallie said that the new principal assigned to her school in 2011 seemed to take an instant dislike to her, evidently eyeing her dismissal as a way to rid herself of an employee she did not care for, and also a senior one whose salary was much higher than a new hire’s would probably be. She even characterized the principal’s behavior as “harassment,” stating she was surprised to find herself being “written up” for numerous trivialities where it did not seem to her to be warranted. She said that the new principal even went so far as to tell an assistant principal who had evaluated her work as satisfactory to change it to unsatisfactory. When this assistant principal wrote a letter to the Department of Education to report this, according to Sallie, no action was taken, because, “They also wanted to get rid of older teachers. Because of the economic situation, I don’t know, but that was what went on.”

Despite the new principal's critical stance towards her, Sallie said that when a fellow teacher was removed for incompetence, she was asked to step in and take over that classroom mid-year. She said she was specifically charged with raising standardized test scores in that class, and she said the principal

told me she thought I was the best person to do that work. And even though I told her I was not familiar with this curriculum, she said I know you can do it. After that I was taken out of my class and put into another class during the second marking period, and she wanted me to do that class, that's the grade eight, so that they could pass the exam, two months after. I took on all of that and two months after, I told her that this was not working because there was a problem with the language. There was the bilingual group and there was a problem with the language. More than half of them could not speak English at all. So they are frustrated, I am frustrated, too. When I see kids who honestly want to learn, I want to teach them, but they could not understand. The principal promised me she would be there to assist and she came three times and never came back, she was busy doing other things. So with all that, I was given a U. Unsatisfactory. After being taken out of my class to do this, and after she promised to support me. She did not come.

Sallie said she found this very unfair, because she was given a U for trying to do what someone else could not do, either, and what she herself was never properly supported to do.

With this U on her record after so many years, yet another new principal arrived at her school in 2012, and Sallie said she felt very vulnerable at that point. "Because of the fact that the principals had to recommend us for the Department of Education to continue our visa applications, if the principal didn't like you, that's it," Sallie said, adding,

It is a matter of budgeting, too. The principals were given their own budgets to spend. They look for cuts and cuts. They look for where they are spending more money to get rid of those people, because with their own budgets they would want to take in people who would work for much less, so that was one of the issues.

Sallie said she felt that this, her last New York City public school principal, was just looking for a reason to dismiss her, and it did not take long for him to find a reason to once again rate her work as unsatisfactory. Sallie said,

I was told I did not talk with certain parents, as if I refused to take with them, but this is what happened: A parent arrived at my classroom door. Security is in the front. The parent was angry, and standing by my door to speak with me, and I refused to talk to this angry parent, because I was concerned by what could have happened. In the first place, the angry parent should not have been sent to my door. And I was written up for not talking to that parent. An angry parent by my door. These are the situations that happened. People just want to write something, to write something critical of an older or more highly paid teacher, but it is not fair. It is not a fair situation.

In my opinion, that's what the Board of Education wants to see today. So I think we were unfairly dealt with. I think the Board of Education did not keep their promises to us, the Caribbean teachers. I think we were not given due process by the Board of Education.

Sallie added,

I do think the Department of Education does not care what really happened. They have gotten the best out of us, and they don't really care anymore. I had a situation where for my green card processing, March of 2013 was my priority date. I was not able to file my change of status papers because of the fact that the DOE terminated my service in August 2012 after 11 years, and I was this close, like 6 months, to my change of status, for a green card, and was denied it. And all these situations were all false allegations. They did not take time to investigate and document what really happened. The principal was asked to resign. That same principal who was given a U was asked to leave because of his service not being to standard. He came in when the school was at a very high B level. By the time he leaves the school was at a D and on the list of most dangerous schools. That's the principal that came in and dismissed me. He does not even understand what's happening, the same principal who gave me a U. He was removed for incompetence, and here I was dismissed by him.

Martha Menard* interview, in her home in Brooklyn, May 7 in the afternoon, about 4 p.m. A native of Guyana, she teaches music in a Brooklyn public middle school. When I interviewed music teacher Martha Menard in the Canarsie, Brooklyn single family home she shares with her brother, sons, and other relatives, she had had a tough day of teaching and she was enjoying a glass of sangria as we spoke. She began by speculating on why so many Caribbean teachers have made their way into the New York City public schools, and on some of the basic cultural conflicts that have surfaced in the wake of their mass recruitment:

The thought was, apparently, that they were serving so many Caribbean children in the school system, and the children need a different kind of treatment to get them into the American education system, so if they had teachers that could be one foot here and one foot there, that would make it an easier transition for them, for the children.

Unfortunately they didn't think that we, too, would have to make a transition. That's one [basic point being made].

And two, they should have understood that when we come, most of us have come from families. A lot of Caribbean people are single parents or they come with husbands, wives, children, some even brought nieces and nephews that they brought up from young, and who they had to now adopt officially so that they could bring them with them officially. Because in the Caribbean your family is not mommy/daddy/children, your family is biological as well as environmental if you want to put it that way. Everybody raises a child. Everybody is interested in a child. If you come from a village, or even in a city, once people know you are a teacher: "Boy, your father is a teacher! Or your mother is a teacher!" And before you arrive home, the litany of what your woes have been for the day have been told to your parent already, have preceded you. So the whole thing was right there and you had to be circumscribed from early on.

Martha, a native of Guyana, brought three children with her when she was recruited to teach music in the New York City public schools in 2001. Her oldest son was 20 years old and had just completed his bachelor's degree, and her younger sons were 16 and 9 years old.

The reason I came, besides teaching, is I figured that if my sons could go to America they would get a chance of learning new things and seeing different ways. There were so many opportunities, I thought, for them to grow and develop. Because the world is changing and several things you can do. And so we came.

Martha said that in retrospect, she does not think the New York City public schools supported her international recruitment as conscientiously as they should have, or as comprehensively as she believes they promised to do:

So many promises were made to me, but I don't even remember. I remember when I came I was told I should have at least \$2,000 for settling in . . . And they told me it was a J visa, I had to learn these things after the fact, and that the children could come and it was a 2-year thing, and after 2 years you have to go home and come back again if need be, if they extend it, stuff like that. I said well, I came with a lot of concerns, because I did my first degree in New Jersey. So I kind of knew the American system of education, I had done my [bachelor's] degree in America, and then I came back to Guyana. My first degree was in music, so I always thought at some point I would come back and do the rest of it, but life is funny . . . so I wanted to give my children that opportunity and also share that experience and all that I had learnt. Because back home I, besides teaching I had done a lot of cultural work and had done a lot of traveling both in my country and abroad. This was a chance to share all of that with my children.

Martha and her three sons moved in with her brother, who already owned a home in Brooklyn, the same one where she still lives and where I interviewed her. She said he encouraged her to come and to bring her sons, and he always made them welcome in his home. “He said, come and we can sort it out when you get here, we can sort everything out,” she recalled.

And when we got here, my first month was horrible. Although I was living in my brother's house, and I still am 'cause I can't afford to live on my own, I didn't have social security number for myself or my sons, there were so many things I didn't have I should have had, because I came the week after 9/11, so everything was in the air and it took me a while to get them settled in, and then for me, and looking back now, maybe if I had done it differently maybe my second son would have gone a different route, but he was nearly finishing high school and I thought maybe it would be a good thing for him to look straight for college.

Like other Caribbean teachers immigrating with their teenaged and young adult offspring, Martha and her sons found the American college applications process confusing and very different from the tertiary transition process in their native country. “We were late for college, so we were a whole year late [for her middle son who was 16 and finished with secondary school in Guyana when they moved to New York],” she said. “So we lost a whole year, and it's still bugging him until today.”

Martha was frustrated by the evident confusion about her qualifications after she arrived. Qualified, educated, experienced, licensed and recruited to teach music, she was first assigned to an elementary school where she was sent to a regular classroom to teach. “That meant I was out of license,” she explained,

because they sent me to teach math, English, whatever, and I never knew from day to day what I would be required to teach. You know, I was just thrown in. I was just subbing [substitute teaching] all over the place in my school, for two or three weeks. Finally, I went to the [head office of the] Board [of Education] to say, “Look, this is not working out. You have got to assign me properly.” And that same day, I found out later, my principal went to the Board to report me for dereliction or insubordination or something because I had refused to teach a first grade special education class. I guess she figured

she would just get me out of the system right away, before I was even in I would have been out. But the person I was dealing with on the Board said, “I’ll send you to another school.”

After a similar experience at her second school, Martha was sent to a third school by the end of her first year. At the last one, however, she found a suitable match at the school where she is still teaching today.

Martha said she still had to deal with a number of problems in this her current school, but that the school and the job have improved over the years. She said,

Now I’m in a school with a very amenable principal who is very good to her staff, so we can do good work. I have been there 11 years, and it took the school a while, but it has been emerging. I grew with the school.

She said she had to build the music program there from scratch, and there were often impossible assignments such as supervising one group of students on the ground floor when she was also charged with supervising a different group of students on the fourth floor. “If nobody is coming to release me, I can’t move,” she said,

but I had to move. So we had problems with that. Anyway, that school has done a total 360 over the years. I earned my master’s degree in the first 2 years, which wasn’t hard for me. I saw four principals come and go over 5 years. In the meantime, I had to deal with my own kids going to school and getting adjusted. I had to find their school fees, because they didn’t qualify for anything like financial aid. I was on a J visa, so I had to find money up front for my children’s international tuition rates. I started working in September, but I didn’t get paid until mid-December.

Martha said her middle son did pretty well finishing high school in a New York public school, graduating from high school at age 17 and then gaining admittance to Pennsylvania State University. Nevertheless, she said his educational progress seemed to be hampered by their immigration experience, especially the confusion they felt with the new educational system and the different kinds of visas he was assigned, all with different limitations. “I call him my alphabet child,” Martha said, “because he had every letter of the alphabet for a visa. He had a J,

then an H, then an F, you name it. And now he's got no visa." Martha's middle son was one of those who "aged out" of eligibility to be a dependent on her visa, which was an H visa at the time when he turned 21. Martha applied for and gained her permanent resident status that same year, as soon as she was eligible to, but it was already too late for her middle son. They were able to get him an F visa next, which is an international student visa, so he was able to continue his studies on that. She said he was working simultaneously on an associate's and bachelor's degree, and just three or so classes from finishing, when he followed what turned out to be some mistaken advice about deadlines at his school, and the next thing they knew he was out of visa status and unable to return to his school. Martha said.

Right now, he's got an associate's degree in math and he needs like three classes to finish his bachelor's degree. But I think he's so disillusioned, you know, he's not finishing. That something that has really bothered me, because he's a math major and he's good at it, and he does other things as well. But I can't push him. He's over 21 now, it is hands off.

Martha noted that her younger son was still "within the age range" to get permanent residency, so he has that and is now residing in the country legally. She said that although he took the past year off of school, he had been making good progress towards his bachelor's degree and she expects that he will probably finish it within the next year or so. "He was nearly done, so I'm hoping he can finish soon," she said.

He has to find his way, I can't . . . I think this has been one of the things with the [recruited Caribbean] families, the structure has been so crazy and trying to cover so many bases. You cannot focus at the right time where the focus should be to get your kids in the right, so they can go right, that's how it is.

Asked if she wants to move back to Guyana, Martha said,

After all these years in New York, I'm thinking maybe I should just see how it goes. I have outgrown Guyana. I do go from time to time and share what I've learned. That give back is always in your heart because that is where I am from. But, my children have outgrown Guyana and now they don't want to go back. They don't have any friends there, they don't have anybody there. New York is home now. They go [to Guyana for a visit],

and it's like a different country. They go and they spend a week, and then they want to go back home [to New York], go home and see their friends.

Martha's earliest school memory takes her back to a very young age, because she recalled that she began going to preschool even before she was supposed to. "I went to school at a pretty young age, because I have an older sister and wherever she went, I wanted to go. I was like her shadow," she said.

My earliest school was a church school, AME [African Methodist Episcopal]. So they had a school and we weren't really AME people, but that was the school closest to where we lived, so we went there. I followed my sister to that school. When it was time for her to move from one building into the next building which had the bigger kids, and the first day when I realized that she wasn't going to be there, I gave them hell. I got away from my class, they tied my sash to a chair, and then I walked with the chair, and I would get away and sit on the stairway to her school. So eventually they said, "Send her to the school." So I went to her school, to a class like hers, she didn't want me in the same class, she was growing up and she didn't want this sister who was a pain in the you-know-where around all the time, so they put me in a class that was the same level but a different one. So she was in first grade, and I was in first grade, but a different one. She was a year older than me.

Despite this initial chaos, Martha said she moved through elementary school happily and quickly, skipping either second or third grade and then ready for the Guyanese equivalent of middle school a little early, at about age ten. "Elementary school was fun, and we did learn a lot," Martha remembered.

We did art. I learned to sew. You painted and did a lot of stuff that doesn't happen in the elementary school here. In Guyana when I was young, you learned to sew, and I mean everybody learned to sew, boys and girls learned to sew, buttons and stitches. And you did art. I remember I always wanted to draw fishes because I was good at drawing fishes. So every week I would draw fishes, all different kinds.

Martha recalled,

And there was music. Always in my life there was music. My parent, my mother, was a music teacher, my grandmother did music, my father used to sing in the band. So there was that, and there was church. And there were extracurricular activities if you went to Girl Guides, Brownies, there were things that you did. It wasn't all about going to school every day and you did a lot of things. And your parents took you, wherever they went, you went, too. If it was an adult thing or whatever, if they were going, you were going.

You just got dressed and went. Unless it was something they did at night, in which case you wouldn't go, you would stay home.

Something else Martha recalled about her early school days was that the school authorities were “very strict.” She said,

We had very strict headmasters, headmistresses, principals you call them here, who instead that A, you had to be clean. That was the first rule. They didn't care about whether you were poor, rich, whatever, everybody had be clean. We wore uniforms, so if your uniform was a white shirt with khaki pants, or a white shirt and a blue skirt, whatever, your parents made sure that you came to school clean every day. And they didn't just check your clothing, they checked your hair, they checked your teeth, they checked your shoes, your nails, you had to be clean always. And you had to be on time. School started at 8:30 and you better be there before 8:30, or you better be there when the school bell rings. You line up to go in. Sometimes it's not your parents fault, and they knew it was not your parents fault, because you had been playing on the street or something crazy. There were no school busses, so children walked to school, or parents might bring them if they had a car. So you always lived in close proximity to the school. This was a city, Georgetown. So, and everybody lived close to a school, and there were several types of school. So I lived like maybe a 10 minute walk from school, not far. Then we moved, maybe a little closer, or maybe the same 10 minutes. School started at 8:30 and you had a break at 10, you could go outside, and lunch was at 11:30, and you didn't start back until 1, and at 3 o'clock you were done. When you went home there were things for you to do, either things at home or you had to go to Brownies, 4H club, Girl Guides, everybody had something to do that was not school, but you were learning, whatever you were doing, you were learning all day.

After all of that, Martha said she and the other children were expected to be home every day by 6 o'clock to do their homework, which was usually pretty light. Martha remembered that her father, who was in the construction trade, used to take her and her siblings to see Captain Marvel and other action movies. She also said that he held his children to very high educational standards, insisting that they master their math and English. “Both of my parents always spoke to us properly, never in baby talk, and they expected that we understood that,” she said, adding that they always encouraged their children to read and to highly value education: “When I was about seven or eight, I remember the biggest joy was that I was allowed to join the library. That was really something.”

Martha remembered,

When you hit your fourth year of high school, you would have been about fourteen, you had to do what was called a preliminary, it might be equivalent to what is here a middle school exam, but it was harder, I think, because you could take as many as 15 subjects if you wanted to. You had the language, literature, English literature, math, algebra, geometry, Spanish, Latin if you were that good at it, religious knowledge, history, English, and West Indian history, there's a million subjects, science, bio, chemistry. That was that. So I took, I think, eight subjects. I can't remember now. I got distinguished in seven of them. So now you're ready for the next level of exams. When you are 15 plus, going on 16, you were ready for the O levels. And there was GCE and the English-based exams, and you would do O levels. That gets five subjects. I think I did, I sat 4 or 5, and I got 4, passed 4.

Although Martha had done well on these examinations, and was therefore qualified to study at the higher level of secondary school preparatory to taking the next level of examinations (the "A" levels, or advanced levels at the end of secondary school), this next level of education was not free in Guyana at that time, and her parents could not afford to continue paying tuition for her. "That is why I started to work at 16," she recalled, noting that that was when she began her teaching career.

I started to work in a school, although legally you were not supposed to work until you were 18. But at 16, they took me as a temporary teacher, and I taught there 2 years. After that I went to Teacher's College for 2 years, and then I was qualified as a teacher. I taught 3 more years after that, and then I won a government scholarship to come to America to do a bachelor's degree.

After completing her bachelor's degree in America, Martha did "all sorts of thing" in the fields of music and culture. She recalled touring with a band, making several recordings, publishing some articles about music and culture. She said that she continued to teach, but with more and more of an emphasis on music education and cultural education, and eventually she was appointed by the Guyanese government as a cultural attaché.

I got to meet some really wonderful people, and I got to travel . . . extensively both in the country and outside of the country. I went to Canada, all over the Caribbean, I went to Cuba. I met all kinds of interesting people. I was a cultural officer in the Music Department. But because you were in the Music Department didn't mean that you only

looked at music. You did dance. You did drama. You did everything. It's just the arts. You did it, went out teaching, workshops, performances, because I was a piano player . . . I taught people. I trained. I educated. I traveled the Caribbean as a music educator, and for music festivals. I met the Queen of England and Prince Phillip,

she recalled, laughing and then making a raspberry sound with her lips. Martha's career as a cultural officer expanded into writing, editing, broadcasting, and performances of all kinds.

Eventually, she became the head of the cultural unit within the Ministry of Education, overseeing dance, music, drama and theatre. "So that was one of those things that I felt I had that kind of experience to come here," she added humbly.

Martha said that her decades as a cultural educator and government officer taught her to see education in a broader sense, to see that

it was not only about education, but about learning to understand people, to work with people, and to adapt. I knew I was able to understand people from different places and different cultures, because I had done that in Guyana. Guyana is like Trinidad that way, a country with various people of the world, African, Chinese, Asian, you name it, all peoples and everything in between. My husband was Amerindian, a full-blood Arawak [the indigenous people of Guyana]. So our children had that advantage, that cultural advantage, and musical advantages with musicians on both sides of the family.

"For me, education is not only about the book," Martha said.

Here in New York, I don't understand. I know America has all these opportunities and I see all these opportunities, but our children [in America] don't get enough exposure to music and culture. And it needs to be a part of their lives from early, you know. So they don't know who they are and who they get to be.

Bernard Longford, in his 50s, is a Rastafarian math teacher born in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and in his twelfth year of teaching math in a New York public middle school at the time of the interviews. Bernard Longford came to teach in New York City from his native St. Vincent in 2001. The New York authorities never came to his country, but it so happened that he had been in New York making employment inquiries at the Board of Education the previous summer. He and his wife had spent much of that summer in New York for various

personal reasons, including her need for medical care, and their desire to visit their many relatives and friends in the area, many of whom were already teaching in the public schools.

I'm a teacher from a family of teachers," Bernard explained, "and teachers I knew here [in New York] told me about a program that was slated to go online the following year, to recruit Caribbean teachers. I heard they were planning to go to Trinidad, Jamaica, and Barbados, but not St. Vincent, so I went in and told them about my qualifications [as a math and computer teacher].

The following year, the recruiters contacted Bernard and offered him a job with a 2-year J [exchange] visa. He said he was happy to accept the offer for many reasons, including his passion for teaching, and the interest he and his wife had in living in New York near many of their relatives who had already migrated. He also had political reasons for seeking employment outside his home country. (He said he had recently run for and lost a local election, and so was not likely to find a teaching job soon.) He brought his only dependent with him, his wife, who was at that time not a teacher but who was allowed to look for work as a J visa dependent.

Bernard was born on the island of St. Vincent in the country of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the middle child and the only son, with two older sisters and two younger sisters. Hailing from a close-knit, religious family where the importance of education was always emphasized, Bernard said that his parents and grandparents all had tertiary educations, and that many of his relatives were teachers or other kinds of educational professionals. He spent his formative years moving among the few inhabited islands of his country as his father advanced in his career as a principal, from Canouan to Mustique to Bequia to Union Island to Mayreau to St. Vincent. Bernard's earliest school memory is from his fourth year of life, shortly after he and his family had moved to the tiny island of Canouan. Canouan, measuring a mere 3.5 by 1.25 miles, is now a luxury vacation destination where the smallest hotel rooms may command thousands of dollars per night. When Bernard was a very small boy, however, the main industry was small-

scale commercial fishing. Bernard explained that it was the only thing many of the Canouans had ever done, and the only commercial activity most families ever expected their children would participate in, and so they saw little point in sending their children to the government schools. Evidently because of this customary view, Bernard's father arrived at his new principalship to find a sparsely populated school with alarmingly low attendance rates.

"That was my earliest school memory, then," Bernard recalls.

I remember going with my father to meet the parents in their homes and the fishing people at their boats. I think I must have been about four. I remember my father talking to them, stressing the importance of education, explaining it to them.

Bernard said his father persuaded them to send their children, giving lessons in the mornings and afternoons and gradually building the levels of attendance and literacy for Canouan. Many of those same students that Bernard's father recruited into primary school subsequently became the first members of their families to go to secondary school on St. Vincent, the main island and the nearest place where secondary studies were offered at that time. Many of these youths went on to higher educational attainments, including professional degrees and doctorates, and they now serve in a range of leadership positions in their country.

Bernard completed his own primary school studies in Mustique, sitting the secondary school entrance exams there at the age of 11, which was usual in what was then a British-based educational system. He won a coveted spot at the august St. Vincent Grammar School, in the capital city of Kingstown, St. Vincent, where he joined the ranks of many of his country's governors and prime ministers, including the current one. At St. Vincent's, Bernard did his O levels and then his A levels from Cambridge in England, although he notes that his native country now manages their own independent examination board. With successful A levels in the sciences, mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology, Bernard embarked on his teaching career.

He noted, however, that this was not his first teaching experience, because he had begun assisting his father with math instruction when he was only 14 years old.

“At first, when I was fourteen, my father would just have me proctor some of the exams,” Bernard recalled.

But then his schedule was so busy, because he was a principal . . . sometimes he would have to arrive late to the math class. So I would also do some teaching, to begin the lesson until he could get there. This gave me an appreciation for teaching, and from that time I knew it was something I wanted to do.

After a brief experience teaching after his A levels, Bernard won an all-expenses-paid U.S. Government sponsored scholarship to Eastern Michigan University. He matriculated there in the fall of 1987 and graduated with his Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics and computer science 3 years later, in 1990. He then returned home where he taught for 2 more years, but soon after his country's government recruited him for a special assignment to establish a computer network for the Banana Growers' Association. That assignment lasted from 1992 to 1995, when he again returned to teaching. He continued his professional development during that time, earning a teaching credential from England. He also worked as a consultant, often using his computer science expertise, and he was working as a consultant in 2001 when he decided to accept the offer to teach in New York City.

“There had been a change of government just before that, and that was one reason why I left at that time,” Longford said. “I had run for political office, and I lost, and I didn't support the government that won and they knew that. So I couldn't go back to teaching just then, not right away, because of the politics of it.”

Since arriving in New York in 2001, Longford has earned two master's degrees. The first is in general education and special education from Touro College, a program specially sponsored by the New York Board of Education and offered by a private Jewish university. His second

master's degree is in mathematics, and he earned that from Hunter College, which is part of the City University of New York system.

Bernard has taught at the same “high needs” Brooklyn public school throughout his time in New York. “High needs,” he explained, is the term often applied to schools where large numbers of students are not performing well academically; and “high needs” schools are located in economically distressed urban areas, suggesting that the students' unmet needs surpass formal educational boundaries. Now called Achievement First Bushwick Middle School, Bernard's school was called Bushwick Middle School when he began teaching in the integrated algebra program and also working as a data specialist there in 2001. He stayed with the school through its 2006 transition to the Achievement First charter format. Achievement First is a comprehensive charter reform initiative which was first established in New Haven, Connecticut in 1998 with the goal of proving that low income urban students can prepare for college and careers as well as more affluent suburban students. The initiative expanded into Brooklyn, New York in 2005 with charters in Crown Heights and East New York, and it came to Bernard's school in 2006. For the 2012-2013 school year, Achievement First served 7,000 students in 22 schools in three Connecticut cities plus Brooklyn, New York (Achievement First, n.d.). Bernard said he supports the Achievement First mission, and he said he is also in favor of implementing that expectation through practical measures, including comprehensive support for teacher professional development and school uniforms.

Like many Caribbean teachers I spoke with, Bernard noted that school uniforms were the norm in his native St. Vincent. He said he believes it is easier for students to focus on their academics when they are required to wear uniforms, explaining,

It is a unifying factor. So many of the disagreements they had were really about what they were wearing, [such as girls dressing inappropriately or students expressing jealousy

of one another's clothing,] but now such matters are no longer an issue. A lot of discipline problems were solved right away when the uniforms came in. I supported the uniforms, because I knew the benefits.

Again like many of the Caribbean teachers participating in this project, Bernard reported that he was “culture shocked” by the general lack of discipline and by the disrespect for teachers and for education that he encountered when he first began teaching in New York City. “Teachers were significant members of society in the Caribbean,” he said. “Families could speak to teachers outside of school to learn how their children were doing, and if the teacher did not give a good report of a student, that student would be in trouble at home.” It was expected that teachers should be treated with respect, because they were doing something very important, they were educating the children, Bernard explained. “With education, you could see the upward mobility of a family within two generations. People could see that it was a way out, so families pushed education, and they insisted teachers be treated with respect,” he said, opining that family views of education seemed quite different when he arrived in Brooklyn, where education and teachers seemed far less valued.

“It is just a different value system,” Bernard said, “and the biggest difference is the lack of motivation on the part of the students.” By contrast, he noted that the last school where he taught in St. Vincent had been a girls' school where it was not unusual for his students to continue on to universities such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and to earn the highest degrees, including doctorates in physics. “I was used to students who knew the value of education,” he explained.

When I got here (to New York), the kids just didn't seem to care. I was shocked. They did no homework. They came to class unprepared, with not even a pencil. Back home (in St. Vincent), I never had to deal with anything like that.

Bernard observed radical differences in the approach to material resources taken by students and schools in St. Vincent and New York. He said,

Here (in New York), all the kids had plenty of resources, but they were just not utilized. Textbooks were just given to them for their use throughout the year, and I was shocked to see students actually throwing these expensive textbooks around the classroom, not using them at all. In St. Vincent, parents had to pay for those textbooks, and students took care of them.

Bernard said that after he had been teaching in Brooklyn for a while, though, after a year or so, he began to understand that the “high needs” schools where he and most of the other recruited Caribbean teachers were working were not representative of all U.S. schools, and not typical of most U.S. schools. Rather, the problems he was seeing were only typical of “high needs” urban schools.

“Now, our school has improved a lot. Now it's better,” Bernard said, crediting many of the changes that came with the transition to the Achievement First charter model in 2006. He said his first 2 years there, though, were so hard that he came home every night and told his wife, “I'm going to quit.” He said she encouraged him, though, and helped him to stay the course, and now he is glad he did, glad to be part of a school that has made impressive progress through comprehensive reform.

Bernard said his wife recently completed her master's degree in psychology, and she is hoping to embark on a new career working with children, possibly in the public schools. “She loves children,” he said. “She has been a youth minister at our church for many years, and she really has something to offer. With her current immigration status, though, an H1 visa, she has not been allowed to work.” When he and his wife first arrived, he was on a J1 visa, and she was on a J2 visa. That meant she could work legally. Once they decided to stay in New York, they had to switch to H visas, and she was no longer allowed to work. She spent that time studying

and doing volunteer work, preparing for the time when she would be legally allowed to work again. All of this had to be supported on one income, Bernard's alone, and as a foreigner on an H visa, his wife was not eligible for financial aid of any kind to help her pay for her schooling. Many of the Caribbean teachers who were interviewed for this project reported this type of difficulty, forcing them and their families to make extraordinary financial sacrifices to obtain the same higher educational credentials that had at least in part motivated them to come to New York. He said he hopes to get his green card within a couple of months (by the end of July, 2013), about 11 years after he was recruited. After that, he will be eligible to sponsor his wife for a green card, enabling her to proceed with her new career using her psychology degree.

Bernard was raised in the Church of God, a Pentecostal Christian denomination headquartered in Cleveland, Tennessee. He and his siblings had to go to church on Sundays, but Wednesday night Bible Study was more for adults or teenagers, and was optional. He said that although he was Anglican at one point, he and his wife are now practicing Pentecostals. He also identifies himself as a Rastafarian, wearing his hair in dreadlocks, an outward expression of his support for Rastafarian principles. He said he was exposed to Rastafarianism through friends during the 3 or 4 years he spent living on his own after he finished his A levels and before he went to Eastern Michigan University. Even during this relatively independent time of his youth, Bernard said he still chose to spend time with his family almost every day, both before and after his time in Michigan. He met his wife shortly after his return to St. Vincent, and they got married in 1994.

Bernard said his whole family resides in New York now, all of them now citizens, permanent residents, or soon-to-be permanent residents. Two of his sisters still work in the field of education, one as a counselor of troubled youth, and the other for the Ford Foundation.

Bernard observed that the 2001 recruitment “left a vacuum” of seasoned teachers, especially in Jamaica, one of the main countries targeted by the New York public schools. “It was a brain drain, yes,” he said.

But it was also a brain gain in many ways. I'm thinking, “How can I give back to my country?” and I know a lot of the recruited teachers are thinking like that. For example, in St. Vincent the math scores have dropped over the past 5 years. I could help them by analyzing their data, showing teachers how they can use data to drive instruction and raise scores. I learned how to do that here, and I could pass this on to teachers in my country.

Bernard said he has done some of this on a small scale, sharing his idea with a few former friends and colleagues, but that he would like to do more. He said he knows some Jamaican math teachers who offered this type of instruction on a summer visit home about 4 years ago, and he would like to do likewise.

As far as advice for other Caribbean teachers who are considering immigrating to New York City to teach in the public schools, Bernard said he would encourage them to do their research carefully, and not to assume that spoken assurances carry the same weight as contractual agreements. “Document everything, that is the main advice,” he said.

For us [who were recruited in 2001], a lot was verbal. We thought they [the New York public school officials who recruited them] had immigration powers that they did not have. They could have applied for skilled professional visas for us, and they did not. I guess because they thought the 2 year J visas were good for our situation. But they were not, because of so many things, especially relocation costs, especially if the teacher had a spouse who could not work. We made such big sacrifices to come here and teach, we wanted to recover the huge relocation costs, and 2 years was not long enough to do that. We had uprooted ourselves and our families, and we couldn't just go back. In the Caribbean culture, if you come back from America, you are supposed to be richer before you go back. If we went back after 2 years, we would have had no money and no jobs to go back to, and we would have looked like failures.

For these reasons, Bernard explained, the J visas, which are by definition 2-year exchange visas, did not turn out to be appropriate for most of the recruited teachers. He also noted that some of the teachers recruited from Barbados faced a different situation and much bigger incentives to

return to their home country, because after 5 years, in 2006, the government of Barbados offered to give them their jobs back and to re-instate their pensions to where they would have been if those teachers had never left. Non-Barbadian teachers, however, had much bigger incentives to stay put in New York.

“Truly, my advice for other teachers in the Caribbean, if you have a job and you can live comfortably, it doesn't make sense [to immigrate to the United States]. The stress is not worth it, and the quality of life is not better here,” Bernard said, adding,

At home, we had paid property to live on. We had neighbors we knew, we knew all our neighbors, and we traded with them. My neighbors and I grew different things, and we traded tomatoes, peas, and corn. Money was not at the center of everything. We had extended family there, but here, it is just the nuclear family. Here, if parents need babysitting, they must pay for it. For so many things that were not monetarily based at home, we must pay here. It is such a stressful life here. It took me 10 years to buy a car here. I always had one at home, but here it took so long because it was more expensive in many ways. Even parking is expensive here, and I don't have my own house and driveway to park in.

Bernard said he might buy a home here, and he might like to return to St. Vincent eventually, for retirement. But for now, his wife has career ambitions of her own here, and they are content to remain where they are.

Bernard also warned Caribbean parents thinking of bringing their children to the United States that many special challenges may lay in store for them. For example, he said he has seen that large numbers of the Caribbean students in the New York public schools are treated as ESL [English as a Second Language] students, because of their accents, even though English is their native and only language. He opined that a bridge program is needed to address this issue and some of the other particular concerns Caribbean immigrant students are likely to face, but in the meantime their parents need to know what to expect. “Caribbean parents don't know about the differences between Caribbean schools and New York schools,” he said.

For example, if the students arrive in high school, they might be far behind in U.S. History. In the Caribbean, of course, the students have been taught Caribbean history and not U.S. History. So they can get caught up in this, falling behind and then not reaching their full potential, just because they don't understand this difference.

Bernard added that there are many differences like this, including a different way of applying to colleges, and so another problem for Caribbean immigrant students can be that they don't go onto college, or they miss a year or two figuring out the different system. He said he thinks international teachers can really help international students in situations like these, and he would like to see programs for that.

Malachi Copperfield, born in Trinidad and Tobago, interviewed at The Black Institute, May 21, 2013. Now trained as an artist and out of legal status, he came to New York with his mother, a recruited teacher, in 2001. Malachi describes growing up in Trinidad and Tobago in idyllic terms. He said he remembers his kindergarten days vividly, because many of the friends he made that year have remained his friends until the present, and some of them have even moved to New York City where he still spends time with them regularly. “All those kindergarten friends, they actually stayed with me throughout my life,” he said, adding that some of them now reside in New York City, close to where he lives now.

Malachi said that he always did well in school, and he was always placed in the “bright class or the advanced class.” Nevertheless, he said that he did not feel overly confident when it came time for him to take the examination at the end of elementary school to determine his placement in secondary school:

I was nervous after I took the exam because I didn't finish it. There was a reading part, and English part, an essay part and a math part. For the essay part, I did not finish the essay, I only got my introduction in. I was so nervous I thought, “Oh my gosh, I failed this, I'm going to get up in a bad school.” But I was really good at writing. My teachers always said so, and my mom kept some of my early essays because she thought they were so descriptive. So one of my earliest memories was being so nervous, so when the results came out, I ended up in my mom's school, which is a really good school.

Malachi noted that many of his relatives had attended the secondary school where he attended and where his mother taught, and that some of them were attending concurrently with him, “so it was really tight knit.” He recalled that he was nearing the end of secondary school, in standard form four or five, and time to take the standardized exams for graduation and college placement was drawing near when his mother was offered a job teaching in New York City. “I was so excited I didn’t have to take the exams, I could just move to New York,” he said.

He said that he had always dreamed of becoming an architect, and had taken as many technical drawing classes as he could in Trinidad. As high school was drawing to a close, however, he said he was becoming increasingly concerned that there was no architectural college on the island where he lived, and none that seemed like a good match for him anywhere else in the Caribbean, either. He said that he and his mother had discussed his evident need to study abroad in the United States or elsewhere in order to pursue his dream of a career in architecture, and that was the context in which she received the offer from New York. He said that this made the decision to accept the offer easy for them, and he and his mother moved to New York as a family of two. He added that he remained in close contact with his father and his father’s extended family, all of whom had helped to raise him although his parents never married.

Malachi’s first impression of attending a public school in Brooklyn, New York was that

high school was a breeze. I was average in Trinidad, and I came here, and I developed some bad habits, because I really didn’t have to study here . . . I was put in the advanced classes, what they called the college bound classes. I had it pretty easy, scholastically, in high school here.

He also noted that he was required to complete 2 years of high school that he had not expected to, because he had been at the end of his secondary school studies in his home country. “A friend of mine, the same age as me, had to go back and complete all 4 years of high school,

so I guess it could have been worse,” he said, adding that the American grade 11 was “a repetition” for him, but that he did learn some new material in grade 12.

Since he had always dreamed of becoming an architect, when it was time for him to visit his school’s college counselor, Malachi said he was excited about discussing all the places where he might apply.

I was like, “Let’s find some architecture schools!” But at that time, I was still on the J visa, so when I spoke to the advisor and gave her all my documents and such, I was really surprised when she said she really couldn’t help me. She said, “You can’t go to college with your status.” And it was really heartbreaking. I was really heartbroken.

He said,

I remember after I graduated [from high school], I remember my mom was going to different schools and it was really hard on her, that was one of the first times I ever saw my mom cry, when they were telling her that they really couldn't help me. But eventually, I was able to get into college, because my status changed, I was able to get into college.

Malachi recalled that he graduated in high school in May, 2003, but he did not enroll in Kingsborough Community College until January, 2004, because it took that long for his mother to change their visa status from J to H. He said he spent much of the intervening months visiting with his father’s extended family in Canada, a convenient bus ride away from New York. He also said that being free to visit his relatives in Canada, or his father in Trinidad for that matter, is something he misses about being in legal status.

After a successful semester of coursework at the community college, Malachi said he continued his studies at the New York City College of Technology, which is popularly known as City Tech.

I took an exam, they said my scores were really great, so I didn't have to do a bunch of other remedial classes or all the other stuff. They put me in like pre-calculus right away, so I was pretty good. First experience, after I registered and they told me my scores were great, and they were going to help me register and assign me classes, they told me to go

down to the college advisor to see what scholarships or grants I was eligible for, I went down there and they told me no, because of your status again, you're not eligible.

In other words, he found that he was eligible to attend the college, but as an H-visa holder, he was ineligible for any form of financial aid such as a government grant or a student loan.

“So my mom essentially had to pay for it,” he said, “and she did. I was really grateful, and I was really excited to really start architecture college.” Because the City Universities of New York had a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy for immigrant students at that time, if you could prove you had been living in the state more than 2 years at the time of your enrollment, in-state tuition would be assessed, and Malachi said he benefited from that policy.

“So at that point, I was in status, so I went to school and I was excited, finally doing what I love to do,” he said.

I got to draw all the time so that was great. A couple of years later, time progressed, I was in the Architectural Club. The Architectural Club is where young architects get to travel and actually see great examples of architectural work. I was part of the club, but then I started becoming more aware of my status and realizing that I don't have a lot of the security that everyone else had. So I became really fearful. They did domestic trips where they would go to Chicago, for example, and I didn't really want to do that because I was afraid of what my status was.

Malachi explained that although he had frequently travelled alone to visit his relatives in Canada while he was on a J visa, on an H visa, he was afraid that a trip outside the country or even outside the city might somehow jeopardize his status, so he stayed put in New York, refusing to travel from that point onwards. He added that this situation became even worse after he turned 21 and was no longer eligible for a visa as his mother’s dependent.

“When I aged out, I definitely didn't want to do anything,” Malachi said.

I couldn't travel internationally, so I started to see my career start to slip away from. It was interesting because the architect for the new World Trade Center, the Ground Zero Master Plan, Daniel Libeskind, came to our school and did this great presentation, and he actually offered, several architects actually did, offered internships to students in our college, but I couldn't take it because at that time I didn't have work authorization. I

remember I had to apply and to keep applying for work authorization. Actually when I graduated from high school I had to go through this exhaustive process of applying for work authorization. So that's another thing, I just saw my dreams slipping away. I couldn't get the experience.

“It was heartbreaking,” Malachi continued.

My friends were all talking about what they did on the job today, at their internships. And I pretty much had to sit back and just listen to what's happening. But I did graduate, graduated cum laude. And I was excited, but also kind of . . . I don't know. Actually before I graduated, I was really concerned about my status. So I had a conversation with my mother, for me to transfer over to the student visa, because I'd have a little more security, and I'd at least have status on the student visa. The first time I applied for it I was denied, but I applied for it again and my last year of college I got the student visa. So I did have status for my last year of school. I had to take a semester or two off to go back to Trinidad to get my student visa. By the time I went and came back the semester had already started.

He added that it was often like that, with visa application requirements forcing him to take semesters off from school, thus delaying his educational progress. Despite all of these setbacks, Malachi completed his college degree, a bachelor of technology in architectural technology, 5 years after he started, and 5½ years after he had graduated from high school, which was also 2 years later than it would have been had he stayed in Trinidad. In other words, he earned his college degree in 2008, 7½ years after moving to New York. He said he began looking for work immediately, hoping especially to find it during the one year window of opportunity which his student visa allowed for him to seek and find work in his field of study. “However in 2008 that was the beginning of the economic downturn,” he recalled,

so no one was hiring. I was speaking to my friends and trying to find who's hiring, who's hiring, and people were sending out their resumes to like a hundred companies and they were not hearing back from any of them even after that much trying. I was lucky enough to get an internship that lasted the summer after college.

He said his internship was “a great experience,” but it was only intended as a summer opportunity and did not lead to a full-time job. Seeing his job prospects dwindling, Malachi said he applied to various architectural master's programs around the city, but he was not accepted at

any of them. “My grades were good and I had done great work, but my portfolio was lacking because I never had the chance,” he said, adding,

My peers had their sketchbooks from their architectural visits all over the world, and they had their portfolios from their internships, all the work that they did that I could not do. I didn't have any of that, so I was really not competitive [as a graduate school applicant]. I didn't have that. So I think that's how my applications really suffered in that regard.

Accepting that graduate school was not likely for him in the near future, Malachi said that he researched other possibilities, and he came across the title of project manager:

So, not an architect, but the person who is the manager on the job, on a big construction job. So I said, you know, I would really like to do that kind of work, it sounds interesting. I did some more research, and then I went to CUNY [the City University of New York] School of Professional Studies, where I did a certificate course in project management. That was really interesting for me. I actually really loved those classes. Working as a project manager would be great.

Malachi did not find work as a project manager, either, and in the meantime his student visa expired. Having “aged out” of eligibility to be a dependent on his mother’s visa a couple of years before that, this meant he became an illegal alien at that point. He said,

my mother was still waiting for her green card, and I was under the misimpression that if she got her green card, I would get my green card, but that was not the case. I had been waiting for that and I really didn’t understand the complexities of the situation, even at that point.

He said,

at this point, we hadn’t formed the organization [for the adult children of the recruited Caribbean teachers] yet. It was only until I guess 2010 when the teachers started having their meetings and I realized that once you age out, that's it and you're not getting your green card. So at that point, that's when I started getting really involved in the campaign, because I realized that I have nothing to lose. I'm not going to get the green card.

Malachi said he has been working for The International Youth Association since that time, organizing and agitating for the green card rights of “aged out” immigrant youth like himself.

Fannie Dickens,* c. 55, Jamaica, at home in Canarsie, Brooklyn, a 2001 recruit with a green card and a brownstone duplex. “Jamaican kindergarten teacher prospering in New

York schools.” I stayed with Fannie Dickens and her family for about one week in May, 2013, in the three-bedroom home plus basement apartment that they own in Canarsie, Brooklyn. I was there at the invitation of her eldest daughter, Maylie,* who had completed my interview protocol with me via Skype a few weeks earlier, and who invited me to her parents’ home to attend the large graduation party her parents were throwing that weekend. The party was in honor of Maylie’s graduation from law school, and also her sister’s graduation from a college in Manhattan. While there, in addition to spending time with and interviewing Fannie, I also had the opportunity to meet Fannie’s husband, who teaches math in a New York public school; Fannie’s younger daughter, the one graduating from college; that daughter’s 1-year-old son; Fannie’s son, a college student; and dozens of Caribbean teachers and others who attended the graduation party. Coincidentally, Fannie’s home is only a few blocks away from the school where Angela, another participant, teaches, so I was also able to meet with her while visiting in Canarsie.

Fannie’s earliest Jamaican school memories reach back to the age of four. “We didn’t have formal schooling,” she said, explaining,

School was under a tree. It was called Barry’s school. That’s the name of the guy who used to teach us. His name was Barry, so he called his school Barry’s School. It was under a tree. He had some benches. It wasn’t a bench that you could lay back in. It was just makeshift benches, slats you could sit on, and we would sit there. But it was fun.

She explained that she and the other children would arrive at Barry’s School at about 9 in the morning, go home for lunch and play at noontime, and then return after lunch and stay until about 4 p.m. each day. “That’s where I learned the days of the week, the books of the Bible, the months of the year, all the little nursery rhymes that I know, I learned at Barry’s School.”

After a couple of years at Barry’s School, when she was six, Fannie recalled that she went on to “big school,” which is what the children called elementary school in relation to

preschool. At “big school,” she said she began as was usual at the time in first grade, and continued on through sixth grade at the same school, St. Paul’s Primary, an Anglican school in Westmoreland, Jamaica, not far from her home at the time. Fannie said she migrated to Kingston, the capitol of Jamaica, after sixth grade, so that she could attend the higher grades that were not then available in her village. After eleventh grade, she attended Shortwood Teachers College in 1978. After 2 years there, she completed a 1-year teaching internship, and began her first teaching job in 1981. “I have been teaching from 1981 until 2001 when I migrated here, and so I have a total of almost 30 years, about 30 years now,” Fannie said. She added that she also earned a bachelor’s degree in teaching from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica several years before migrating to the United States, and then earned a master’s degree in early childhood from Brooklyn College after she began teaching in New York. “I graduated in June, 2004, because I wanted to march with my husband [who earned a master’s degree in math education from the same college at the same time],” she said, adding that she has since earned a second master's degree in school leadership, district leadership and school administration. Fannie remembered growing up in a

very loving family. We were very poor, we didn’t have much, but my parents were very lovely people. They made sure we went to school every single day. Whether we were sick, lame or lazy, we had to go to school . . . We always were well taken care of, and my parents always made sure we did our work well. We were well disciplined. You couldn’t go home or my teacher couldn’t call and say, you know how it is in the West Indies, they couldn’t call and say Fannie did this or Fannie did that today, because I don’t know if you know that much about West Indian parents, they would come to school and thrash your behind right in front of everybody.

Fannie recalled, “We didn’t have much, but we always had something to eat,” smiling at the memories.

We didn’t have a big house. I shared a bedroom with my six other siblings. The house had two bedrooms, so my parents were in one room and we were in the other room. We had a

little living room and a little what you call a verandah, we call it a patio now. Back then we called it a verandah.

Fannie said that her mother and father always worked very hard and took good care of the family. She said her father worked long hours as a bookkeeper for a nearby sugar estate, while her mother worked at home taking care of the family. “My father took such good care of us,” she said,

He never had much, but he worked his fingers off for us. He passed away in 1999, before I came here [to New York]. Whatever he made, he made sure it was spent in the house, so that we were fed and clothed . . . My mother, we never called them stay-at-home moms at the time, but she would stay home and do all the work while my daddy went to work . . . She made clothes for us, she would even sew our underwear. So we had two sets of underwear. We had underwear that we would wear to church, that was bought at the store. And we had underwear that we would wear around the house, that was underwear she made. She would sew our nightgowns, she would sew our clothes for church. She made our [school] uniforms, she made everything, she did everything she could to cut costs, to make sure that she could make ends meet.

Fannie said that, after working all day as a bookkeeper, her father would come home and rear cows. “So in the mornings, he would get up at about four o’clock to take care of his cows, make sure they were fed, and he would milk them,” she said,

And I grew up drinking a lot of cow's milk. That was a staple in our house at the time, because they didn't have a lot of money to buy food. So he would milk the cows, and the cows would provide milk. And he also did a lot of farming, too. So he would plant provisions, not so much so vegetables, because he didn't have the time to spend watering and all that, but he planted a lot of yams and corn and dasheen . . . and that's how we grew up, basically.

Fannie said her parents were not yet Christians when she was very little, but her mother “made sure [they] went to church every Sabbath” with an aunt who used to bring Fannie and her older sister. “She was very, very, very, very strict,” Fannie remembered,

I guess it's because of her upbringing, she was illiterate, but she had us in straightjackets every week. I hated church at the time, because it went on very long and you couldn't sleep. But we were very little girls, and it was hard . . . At the time we never understood a word they were saying.

Fannie said she was glad when she was 8 years old and her mother joined the church, and she liked it much better after that. “With my mother there, I had a little more freedom at church, and we started having more fun.” She said that she has been glad to be a Seventh Day Adventist since that time, and that her three children belong to the same church. She said her father became a Christian and “began serving the Lord” later in his life, and her husband visits church with her sometimes, but not usually, because he usually works his second teaching job on Saturdays. Fannie and her daughter Maylie both described the Seventh Day Adventist Saturday Sabbath service as a day long affair, beginning with prayers in the morning, and including a community lunch and then youth activities throughout the afternoon. Fannie also recalled that in addition to the all-day Saturday services, she used to attend Sunday school to learn more about the Bible. “Afterwards, after my mother joined the church, it was fun, but early, with my aunt, it wasn’t fun,” she said.

Fannie’s earliest experience outside of her family was when she was 16 years old and she first enrolled at Shortwood Teachers’ College, her first time living away from home. She said it was a dormitory situation in which she shared a flat or apartment with 12 other ladies. “At the time, I was the youngest and the smallest,” she said,

because a lot of them were what you call in Jamaica ‘pre-trained teachers,’ because you could teach at that time before you could go to college. So a lot of them were older women, and I was like the baby of the group. I couldn’t cook. I didn’t know how to do anything. So they kind of helped me out and showed me how to do things on the domestic side . . . Once a month, we had to cook a meal, but I did not know how. They would let me strip the onions and wash things,

Fannie said, laughing. [I can attest that Fannie is an amazing cook now, and I especially liked her curried goat with mashed potatoes.]

Kingston, the location of Shortwood College, is about 135 miles from Fannie’s hometown of Westmoreland, “not like 135 miles here, it took a long time to get home,” she said.

Consequently, she only went home for Christmas and Easter, spending most of her weekends alone on campus while most of the other students went home, or out to parties with friends and family. She said that although she missed her family, she enjoyed the freedom, too, and once she graduated, she decided she wanted to stay in the big city.

“My mother really wanted me to come back and live at home with her after college,”

Fannie explained,

because she really needed help, she had so much work to do, but I wanted to go and explore and broaden my horizons and not go back and be stuck in a little dark district, so I didn't go. So she was kind of upset with me, she cried and talked about all the other kids who were helping their parents, and she said I was ungrateful and all of that, but it didn't help.

After graduation, Fannie served her first year teaching internship in Jamaica, and that is where she met her husband, Charles, in 1981. She said they married in 1984, and then they started their family, and that was it. She never lived in Westmoreland again, although she visited her mother at least monthly while she lived in Jamaica. She still visits her home village about once a year, and now she brings her mother for long visits with her in New York. She has helped her mother pay off her house in Jamaica, and she is proud to say that she has been helpful to her mother after all.

Although it was advertised in the Kingston newspapers that the New York City Board of Education was coming to Jamaica to recruit teachers in the summer of 2001, Fannie said she never noticed the ads or heard anybody talking about it until just two days before they were scheduled to arrive. “So I did up my application, and I ran with it the next day,” she said.

I couldn't get time off work, so right after school, I ran with it to the university [where the interviews were being held]. When I went to the university with it they told me that the deadline had passed, they had stopped taking applications like at 4 p.m.

Fortunately, though, she was also told that she could return the following Friday for “open interviews,” without appointments. She did that, and she recalled that the interviewer said to her, “Ms. Dickens, I’m not going to leave you. I’m taking you back to the United States with me!”

Fannie said she was excited to go home and tell her husband and three children about her job offer. She said she was not surprised when her husband hesitated at first, because he had always considered himself a “Rastafarian in his heart,” and had often spoken of his dream of repatriation to Africa, not America. She said she was also unsurprised when her three children responded joyfully to the prospect of immigrating to America, especially her older daughter, Maylie, who had always spoken of attending college in the United States.

At that time, I said, “For my kids, for their college and for their betterment, I am going to America.” I said, “If I get a through [the visa process, etc.], I’m going” . . . but when I told the recruiter that she warned me, she said, “No,” she said to me, “I don’t think it’s a good idea for you to come to the United States with three kids without your husband.” She said it was going to be very rough, and it would be hard to survive with three kids, and she said I would need my husband to come, too.

Fannie said the recruiter encouraged her to bring her husband in for an interview. Impressed with his long years of experience teaching advanced mathematics and economics, he, too, was offered a job and a visa, and he, too, accepted. Fannie said the New York school authorities completed all the necessary paperwork for her, her husband, and their three children [aged about 8, 12 and 16 at the time], and the five of them came up on their J visas.

However when we came here that was a different story. All of the nice things we were expecting, they didn't happen. When we were at home they told us that we would be compensated for our teaching years, then when we came here they told us it's years after your bachelor's, so the years you had before your bachelors, that was not counted. And most of us had most of our years before our bachelor's, because in Jamaica, you're not required to have a bachelor's to teach. As long as you go to Teacher's College and you're certified as a teacher, then you are teaching. Then later on you can do the bachelor's, and then later on you can do the master's.

In other words, Fannie said that many of the Jamaican teachers were unpleasantly surprised by their lower placement on the teachers' salary schedule, with many of their years of professional teaching experience going unacknowledged.

The Dickens children stayed with a friend of the family in Queens for the first 2 weeks while their teacher parents participated in the orientation process. Fannie said they were very lucky to have this friend, because as soon as the orientation ended, the teachers were told they had to find their own housing without any more help, and this friend of the family lent them the money they needed for the required two months deposit so they could get an apartment on their own. "But out of all that bad came some good because, let's see, in 2003 we were able to buy this house," Fannie said, gesturing to her well-appointed living room. "A lot of teachers were not this fortunate, but it worked for us because my husband and I were both teaching, so we could both get a mortgage." Although they bought their home in 2003, Fannie noted that they did not get their green cards until 2010, a process she described as long and arduous, with minimal help from the New York school authorities.

Asked about her first impressions of the New York public schools, Fannie said,

Oh, my God, my first experience teaching in the United States was horrendous, horrible. Horrible, horrible, horrible. I would go to my bed and wish for Sunday night not to come for another week not to go back to work. Because I had a second grade from Hell. When I went there, they created this second grade class for me. So they had like about four other second grade classes. Or three others, so what they did was they asked each teacher to take a certain number of kids to make up a class for me, so you know each teacher's going to take out her worst. So everybody took out their worst, and gave them to me, and it was horrible. It was not a nice experience. And then I had no help.

Fannie said that after a few weeks teaching this difficult second grade class, she went to the principal of her school and asked if she could be a paraprofessional instead of a teacher, because that work looked so much easier, but she said the principal told her, "No, Ms. Dickens, you don't want to be a para, they don't work any money."

Fannie said,

at that time, I called back my friends in Jamaica and I said to them, “I wish I could come back,” and all those kids I had teaching in Jamaica who I thought were bad kids, I wanted to find them and give them a nice tight hug, because I realized that they were not bad kids. These kids that I had [in New York] were really bad kids. They were disrespectful. They had no manners. And I was not accustomed to that. I was accustomed to teaching kids who showed respect to teachers, who were mannerly, and this was such a rude awakening for me, the way they talk back to you, the way they acted in class, their behavior. And it's like I had no control. I had no control and it was chaos.

Fannie said that before too long she began to “learn the system.” She said she learned how to “manage and manipulate like the other teachers, how to get up in their faces. I learned how to talk like them and talk back to them. I learned how to discipline them and not shout at them. Because at first I was constantly shouting, shouting and screaming, and I would come home sometimes and I had no voice. But after a while you know you get into it and you learn the system and you learn that discipline here is not the same as discipline back home in the Caribbean. You learn that a lot of times you have to turn the other cheek. A lot of times you have to just let things slip by, let things go and not pay too much attention to certain things. And so it has been working so far.”

Fannie spent her first 10 years in the same school and then, after the enrollment dropped, she was excessed but soon found work in another school, where she was still working when I spoke with her. Although she taught second grade for her first year, since then she has been teaching kindergarten, her preferred grade.

According to Fannie, the best thing about her move to New York was the kind of tertiary education she and her husband have been able to provide for their children. “Education in Jamaica is very expensive,” she said.

To go to the university back home is a lot of money. It's a lot of loans. Very expensive commuting, money for lunch, money for books, everything has skyrocketed there . . . When I went to the university there, I had to take a lot of loans.

Fannie said that when she and her husband migrated to the United States in 2001, they had to repay the Jamaican government more than U.S. \$5,000 that they had borrowed for their educations there. This was because when they had taken out those educational loans, they had signed a government bond promising to teach in Jamaica for at least 3 years after finishing those educational programs. However, by accepting the New York recruitment offers in 2001, they were breaking those bonds and so had to repay loans that they otherwise would not have had to repay, had they continued teaching in Jamaica rather than moving to New York.

Fannie described the Jamaican government student loan interest rates as “exorbitant,” and she said that with two daughters nearing college age, she had been very worried about how she and her husband were going to be able to afford to finance tertiary educations for them. Especially since her oldest daughter, Maylie, had always spoken of attending college in the United States, Fannie did not see how she could pass up the possibility of affordable American college opportunities. Since then, she has earned two master’s degrees, her husband had earned one master’s degree, her older daughter has earned a bachelor’s degree and a law degree, her younger daughter has earned her bachelor’s degree, and her son, the youngest, is now attending college. Fannie said she does not see how she and her husband could possibly have financed all of this higher education for the family had they not come to New York. “That was one of my major reasons for coming,” she said.

Fannie noted that teaching is considered a highly respectable middle class profession in Jamaica, yet teachers there are not paid nearly enough to maintain a middle class lifestyle. For example, they generally don’t make enough money to pay for their children to attend private schools or college. “So we had to do every little thing to make ends meet,” she explained. “We

had to do side jobs. Tutoring jobs. I would come up here [to New York}, buy things and sell them [in Jamaica]. Buy clothes, buy stuff, to sell, just to come up with that money.”

Fannie also said that, throughout many years leading up to her recruitment, she used to spend her entire summer vacation working as a nanny in New York City to help her family in Jamaica make ends meet. “The Friday we were out of school I would be on the plane to New York, and the weekend before school was starting again, I would return the Sunday just before the first day of school,” she said, adding that that additional income enabled her to buy appliances and better clothes for her family. She said her husband also worked multiple jobs, teaching at three different schools at one point. Asked how the recruitment process may have affected other people in Jamaica, Fannie said that she believes it had a distinctly negative impact on many Jamaican students. “The New York Department of Education took the cream of the crop of teachers,” she explained.

You had to have a bachelor’s degree at a time when most Jamaican teachers did not have that, and you had to have a minimum of 5 years of experience. So they took away all the best educated, most experienced teachers. I had 20 years of experience when I came, and that was not unusual.

The hardest part of the whole immigration process, according to Fannie, was the visa and green card application process. She observed that Canadian teachers seemed to receive preferential treatment and receive their green cards much faster than Caribbean teachers did, and she did not know why that was. “I’m not going to play the race card here,” she said, “because there were black Canadian teachers, and I’m not sure why they were placed in a different category and treated more fairly than we were.” Fannie said of the teachers’ recruitment and visa experiences,

it was really depressing, really distressing, really disturbing for a number of us. . . . Along the way, many teachers lost family members without ever getting the green card. I have known of many teachers they lost their spouses, they died, never got the green card. I have known of many marriages that got broken up because they never got the green card, and there were a number of years they could not work. A lot of female teachers came,

brought their husbands with them and they couldn't work because if you have the H1 visa, your spouse doesn't get a visa. A lot of marriages, I have a very good friend whose marriage broke down and I know of a lot of other families that broke up because of the same situation. So I would advise any teacher who is going to come here on an H1B if your husband is not a teacher, too, not on the program, it's not a wise thing to bring him here. If he has a job in Jamaica, let him remain in his job until it's feasible for him to come and get a job here. Because if he's going to pack up and come here it's not a good thing. It's not a good thing.

Fannie's advice for other Caribbean teachers considering following in her and her husband's

footsteps is to

make sure that you have family here, and that you have strong supports before you come. I would encourage them to come for your own personal development, for financial gains, there can be a lot of financial gains. Be willing to make the sacrifice to start all over. We had to start all over when we came here, but it has paid off. We are much better off than we were in Jamaica. Our kids are all in school. Had we stayed in Jamaica I'm not sure that we would have afforded three kids in college at the same time. But because of all the things they have in place [in the United States], my kids were able to get loans, and that helped a lot.

Fannie said,

life is a gamble, you just have to take a chance. When we came here we just came with our nine suitcases. And see what we have accomplished over the years. I would encourage anybody to come. Just make sure you have a strong support system. Because you are going to need a good start. You're going to need that help to start, and if you don't have that help to start, it's going to be tough. It is going to be very rough. Also you have to have that determination that once you come and you are thrown in that sea, you have to learn to swim. There's no turning back. So.

Maylie Dickens, 28, is the adult child of two Jamaican teachers recruited in 2001.

She was just completing law school at a prestigious institution in the Southeastern United States in April, 2013, when I interviewed her via Skype, and also in person at her parents'

home in Brooklyn. Maylie Dickens recalled that the summer she turned 16, her mother came

home one day and surprised her, her father, and her younger sister and brother with news of a job offer in New York City.

My mom, she just came home one day and she said, “Oh, we’re going to America. I got a teaching position. I’m going to try to get your father in tomorrow.” The following day he went in for an interview and by the end of the week, they both had jobs.

Maylie explained, “I mean, she calls the shots in our family. She got the jobs in July and then by August we were here [in the USA].” Maylie said that it seemed to her that she and her family did not have as much difficulty obtaining their green cards as some families appeared to have.

I’ve heard of different issues that the teachers have had with the green card process and their dependents aging out before it was granted and all that . . . Luckily for my family, I wouldn’t say it has been quick, but it has been pretty smooth. I haven’t heard of any unfair issues that they have had to encounter. It seems as if once they followed the directions, paid their money, did all they had to do, make sure their loans in Jamaica were paid off, and all of that, it seems as if they were granted their green cards in a reasonable time. I mean they’ve been here almost 10, 11 years now, and they got their green cards after about 10 years.

Maylie said that she herself is a naturalized United States citizen, having been married to a U.S. citizen for about 6 years before divorcing about a year before this interview. Maylie said that although she and her family now all have either their green cards or citizenship, she thinks that the New York school authorities could have given more support in the process than they did:

It seems as if the Board of Ed probably gave broad directions or broad instructions, as in, “Here’s how to apply for your green card. In order to apply for your green card you need a master’s and maybe to clear all your debts in your home country.” It seems as if it was probably pretty broad instructions, but it was up to the motivation or the intellect of that teacher to kind of carry it out on their own. I’m sure there are support groups, my mother has mentioned over the years meetings being held to kind of support teachers and help them in their fight. I think at one point there was a law firm dedicated that all the teachers used. But other than that, it doesn’t seem as if they had much support . . . I’m sure there are other teachers who probably came that same year who probably don’t have green cards yet. I do think that a lot of the initiative came from my mother because she’s just such a go getter.

Even in her earliest school memory, Maylie recalled that her mother was not there for her first day of what in Jamaica was called infant school, which was like kindergarten in the United States.

I believe my mom was probably away. She had a pattern where she would come to the United States and work over summers as a nanny or a babysitter with a family here [in

the United States]. That was pretty much how she brought in extra income, coming over here. So she was a frequent traveler. She came here to the United States every summer and worked. Usually when school started in September, she would probably come back like a week after. So I specifically remember starting kindergarten and my dad took me to school. He introduced me to one of my best friends, you know another girl who was sitting in the classroom, I was reluctant to talk, and he's like, "Oh, here's a nice girl, talk with her." And you know to this very day she's one of my best friends. So that's kind of what I remember of infant school. And of course then my mother would be there like a week later.

Maylie, laughing at the memory, said, "but it was kind of rough, you know, my dad, he tried to comb our hair and you know just do stuff a mom should do." She also said that her father worked for the telephone company at that time, not having completed his teacher training yet.

Maylie said that having a mother for a teacher seemed to confer a special status on her and her family, something she felt proud of. She said that, knowing her mother was a teacher, her teachers seemed to take extra care of her education, making sure she was understanding the material well and never letting her fall behind. "You know, the teacher's child is very different, in Jamaica," she said, adding that once she went on to the middle school where her mother was teaching, that was

very tough. Having your mom there as a teacher was, of course, very tough. You had to be well behaved and my mom had this restriction where I couldn't play. The other kids played, but if I played my uniform would get all dirty and sweaty. So I had to be immaculate and pristine at all times.

Towards the end of middle school, Maylie said that she did so well on her exams that she gained entrance into what many consider the top ranked high school in Jamaica, a school that is widely agreed to be in the top one or two by most measures. She said that her mother insisted she attend this particular Roman Catholic girls' high school even though the family had always been and remain to this day Seventh Day Adventists. "My mom was happy with me when I got in," Maylie remembered.

She spent lots of money sending me for extra classes to ensure that I got the highest grade possible on the exams. Honestly when I did the exams, it was pretty much like I was just doing homework. I could easily see the answers, I had done a million practice questions. The teacher who taught the extra lesson classes, she was the best in that region. She taught in my school and she and my mom were friends. So I think I had seen every question in the world. After I took the exam, I knew I passed.

Starting high school that was the first time Maylie ever ventured far from her home, she said, estimating that the daily trip to Kingston took between 45 minutes and 1 hour each way. She also said that while growing up she had always assumed her family was middle class, once she began attending high school she soon realized that the great majority of girls there were

strictly upper class. It was mostly children of politicians and usually a lot of white, Chinese, or Indian immigrants. But a lot of children from well off families. So that I'd never been accustomed to before. That was a big transition. Of course they were all smart. They went to the best prep schools in the island, so there was lots of pressure to keep up with that.

Maylie said she actually felt relieved when her mother announced that they were coming to America, because it meant that she did not have to take the Jamaican end-of-high-school exams for college placement. She said that compared to her Jamaican Catholic girls' high school,

high school in Brooklyn was a breeze. All the things they covered, I'd already learned in Jamaica. It was very easy. I was always at the top of the class. I knew it was probably something bad, too, about American high school. I'm like, "It's kind of sad that you guys didn't learn this before, you know." It definitely helped [being educated in Jamaica].

Maylie credited her Jamaican educational foundation with her continued success at Baruch College in Manhattan, and with the "great LSAT scores" that helped her to attend two of the better ranked law schools in the Southeastern United States. She said that she and her parents decided early on that private colleges were too expensive for them, so she chose a city college and worked throughout her undergraduate years to help her parents pay her expenses. "At that time, I was still on an H visa, so I couldn't work legally," she recalled.

I took a lot of “off the book” jobs, a lot of babysitting. I also had to do a lot of school-related internships, and those had to be unpaid, because of my visa status at the time. While other students were doing the same internships for pay, I had to do it unpaid.

Just before she finished college, Maylie married a Jamaican man who already had United States citizenship, conferring upon her a green card and thus the legal right to work in the United States. She said she accepted an offer with an investment bank on Wall Street. She stayed there about 2 years before enrolling in law school. Maylie started law school in North Carolina and then finished in Georgia, because she decided she wanted to settle down and build her career in the latter state.

When I was in Jamaica, I was always so healthy, I took it for granted,” she said, “but then when I moved to New York, I developed asthma and I was on antibiotics all the time. So when I had the opportunity to move for law school, I just took it, and I moved as far away as I could, closer to the sun. And you know I just promised myself, I’m not going back.

Maylie said that she felt “pretty fortunate” in her childhood, growing up with both of her parents, as well as her brother and sister. She said that as the oldest she always felt a lot of pressure to “stay on top, get good grades, don’t get pregnant, and be a good girl. Just to be a perfect little angel.” She said she also had to part fights with her siblings, but if she were ever involved in a fight, one of her parents would spank her. “Spanking was common with Jamaicans,” she explained, adding, “Actually, I think it’s good. I have a lot of respect for my parents. I’m still afraid of them to this very day.”

Maylie said that she feels very grateful to her parents for providing so well for her and her siblings.

I feel blessed to have had both parents there supporting us. My brother and sister and I, we’ve never been in positions where we had to choose food or go to school. We’ve always had beds to sleep on. My parents work very hard, like I said, my mom summers after working for the whole year as a teacher during the summers she was here making money. Then she would bring items back to sell to make more money. My mom is like a modern day hustler. And then my dad, he has about three jobs right now. He has the 9 to 5 at the school, then after school he’s an after school teacher, up ‘til around 8, he gets home at 9

or 10 p.m. And then on the weekends he teaches Saturday school. He's a modern day hustler, too. My mom, now she just does the 9 to 5, because she's tired. My sister just had a son, so I have a nephew. She's full time grandma, too, now.

In retrospect, Maylie said that she now thinks she had a very sheltered childhood, never being allowed to go anywhere without her father. She said that since moving to America, she has seen her parents “kind of ease up” and let her younger sister and brother do many things she was never allowed to do: “I think I got the blunt force of strictness, because I was the oldest and because we were in Jamaica,” she said. “I thought it was just so unfair, so unfair, but now I also think it’s because we moved here as well. I think if we were still in Jamaica, it would be still the thing, same standard.”

Maylie attributed much of this change to the extreme business demanded by the American lifestyle, which she said is very different from the lifestyle in Jamaica.

In Jamaica, you work and you come home and chill. You go to the beach, life is just better, and you can enjoy the sunshine. Here, it’s just work, work, work. Pay your bills. Work, work, work, pay your bills. It’s very hectic. I don’t think my parents had time to be as strict [with her brother and sister] here.

Maylie said one area where her parents have maintained very high standards, though, is in their educational expectations for all of their children: “My parents are big enforcers for education. They don’t care what you want to do after college, but you have to go to college.” She said her sister is following an educational path similar to her own, graduating from the same college as her and beginning work on Wall Street soon, and her brother is attending culinary school to become a chef.

“We’ve been going to Assembly Adventist Church since we were born,” Maylie said.

We all go to the church, and I believe it's been the same for my mom. Her mom, my grandmother, is also an Adventist, so it's pretty much tradition. My dad is not an Adventist, so if we ever needed leeway or we wanted to beg not to go to church, we kind of asked for help from my dad. But he usually pointed back to our mom, and okay, we have to go to church. It's always been instilled, we do church all day on Saturdays. Friday

nights we don't watch T.V. or drink alcohol, and we're just bored on Friday nights. I think it's very popular back in the Caribbean. I don't know why, but I do know it is a popular religion there.

Maylie also explained some of the Adventist traditions, including the promotion (but not strict requirement) of vegetarianism, and the observance of a Sabbath from Friday at sundown to Saturday at sundown. She said that the religion promotes modesty and simplicity, and encourages worshippers to ask themselves, "What would Jesus do?" and to find ways to be "in this world, but not of this world."

Although she described Seventh Day Adventism as "kind of a religion of fear," she said that now that she feels free to attend any church, she still chooses to remain Adventist. "So I think at this point now, it's more a personal conviction for me." She said she likes to attend the all-day Saturday services that usually last from 9 in the morning until 7 at night, and that over the years she has often served as a youth minister for her local church. She estimated that her Brooklyn Adventist church was "probably 90% Jamaican, with a few Trinidadians, Grenadians, and Guyanese, and I think we have one white couple."

Maylie described her mother as "really nice, a really great lady. I don't know anyone who doesn't like her." When I asked if she thought her mother would be willing to do a Skype or telephone interview with me, Maylie hesitated:

I don't know about that. Over the phone, and email, she's just not too into that. But if you went to the house and sat and talked with her and she was like cleaning or cooking, you would see that she is really nice, and she would talk to you.

Then Maylie invited me to visit with her family in Brooklyn for the graduation party they were planning for her and her sister, and to ask her mother if I could stay at their house, which I subsequently did. The interview with her mother, Fannie, was the result of that.

Asked about her first experiences growing up outside the home, Maylie said that marrying her college sweetheart and moving in with him and his mother was really the first time she had lived away from her parents. She said that his mother moved to New York several years earlier, and that was why they already had their citizenships, as well as a home that they owned, by the time that she knew them.

Asked if she ever thought about moving back to Jamaica, Maylie said it seems less and less practical now that she has to repay her law school debt. “All those firms care about is billable hours, so I guess I’ll be working 12 to 15 hour days,” she said.

It’s funny, because that is part of why I quit investment banking, because of the long hours. But I guess it is the same in law . . . So I’m pretty much going back into that lifestyle that I didn’t like before. Living to work.”

Maylie said that, perhaps partly because of her legal training, she has become “the counselor” for her family of origin. “They look to me as the voice of reason,” she said, adding,

I’ve had to draft a million letters for my mom. For example, she was affected by the storm, Superstorm Sandy. Her basement apartment was flooded. I was the person who was in charge of writing all the letters to FEMA [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] and explaining all the circumstances. And I do drafts of wills and look over loans. I’m the voice of reason, and they know I’m a brutally honest person, so they come to me when they want to hear the truth. So that is my role outside the family, and for my family.

Maylie said that her mother’s decision to accept the New York recruitment offer seemed like

a no brainer for her. She did it she says because she would not have been able to afford send all three of us to college in Jamaica. It’s very expensive there. The funds from the government are limited. And on a teacher’s salary, you can’t pay that, you can’t pay for two children’s school. You know I asked her why she came and she said she came because of us. And my dad, his brain belongs to my mom. So whatever she’s doing, he’s doing it, too. He’s like her.

“I remember how surprised and excited she was that day when she told us she got in,” Maylie said,

It didn't seem like a process she had been working on before, just based off of her shock and surprise. So just based off of her reaction, I don't think there were advertisements, but I don't know. Maybe the teachers knew they were coming next Monday.

Asked for her first impressions of the New York public high school she attended, Maylie said that it was

not very challenging at first. After a while, it started to be a little bit of a challenge, but I could not study and do well, and I started to think, "Okay, I'm pretty much smarter than everyone in the school." My first impression really was that the students were very rude, very disrespectful. In Jamaica we have to stand when the teachers come in the classroom. And say good morning or whatever time of day it is. You don't even acknowledge the teachers here. The students just keep talking when the teacher walks in, and they say, "F you," and they curse teachers. I nearly fell out of my chair. Students were arguing with the teachers, and going back and forth, and I was like, "Are you stupid?" I don't know, that was my first impression. I had not seen anything like that, ever. It was a total culture shock and I mean the teachers have no power here, they can't do anything. They can't even tell you to go outside or get out, but that's just unheard of in Jamaica.

In addition to the rampant disrespect for teachers, Maylie said she was also unpleasantly surprised by the number of police officers in and near the schools.

There were always too many cops outside of the school and pinning kids down on the ground, and I thought that was pretty brutal. I did not like that. I did not understand why Brooklyn kids were treated like animals. But then I feel that they kind of acted like animals, so it was confusing. There were always these gang fights outside of the school. After school, my mom told me just hop on the bus and go home. Don't linger, just go home, she said, so that's pretty much all I did. But you know it was a little rough, coming from an all-girls Catholic school where everyone was nice and clean and prissy and then coming to this new environment where they seemed like a bunch of hoodlums.

Maylie said that she has a different impression of American public schools now that she has had the chance to live outside of New York City for a few years.

Now I see that was New York, and nowhere else is really like that . . . But then I've seen that African American kids in particular have a lot of issues, just like the kids in New York. So now I think it's more of an African American issue where the cops are always in those communities, and those schools are always shutting down. I see that the poorer kids end up going to the high schools that are being shut down, and the richer kids get to go to high schools that are better. So I think that is the whole larger issue.

Maylie suggested that more involved parents, smaller, better resourced schools, and “ironically, fewer cops” would go a long way towards alleviating many of the problems that beset the “hard to staff” urban schools where Caribbean teachers were recruited.

Maylie said that she has seen both of her parents consistently going “above and beyond” their job descriptions to help their students and the students’ families whenever they can. She said that her mother keeps a separate cell phone exclusively so that her kindergarten students’ parents can reach her if they ever feel they need her, and that she refuses ever to turn that cell phone off. She said that her father has to deal with the more difficult behavior of older students, but that “they don’t mess with him, because he’s a math teacher and everyone needs to pass math, and because the kids view him as a cool teacher.”

Maylie mentioned that, in addition to helping everyone in the family pursue higher education and buying a home in Canarsie, her parents have been able to send money home to Jamaica to help their relatives there. “We are the emergency funding for our family in Jamaica,” she said, adding, “If they ever need anything, they call us. I think it has been beneficial for our family there. And of course, when they come to New York, they have a place to stay, and now my parents can help them find work.”

Maylie advised other families thinking of following her family’s lead to come with clear goals in mind, and to be honest with themselves about whether they want to stay two years or five years, or settle in the United States for the rest of their lives. She particularly warned potential immigrants about coming for a short time and trying to move back, because she said the moves were too expensive and disruptive to make that viable.

I have heard of a few scenarios where teachers came here, and then they went back to Jamaica, and they didn't have anything, because during their time here they spent all their time and resources here, and then they had nothing to return to. They made no plans for what they would do on return. So have a clear plan If you intend to stay, know that it is

going to be tough. Teaching in the U.S. is not like teaching in Jamaica. Here you don't get respect from the students, they don't care about you. Here, principals are pretty quick to fire teachers at the drop of a hat. Now a lot of schools are closing. It is not the same as Jamaica where you are a teacher in 1990 and you will be a teacher in 1998. It is not like that here. It is not that stable here. The best way to keep yourself on top of the education game is to further your education. You have to have a plan to get a master's. You have to have a plan to go back to college and get some more certifications. It seems to me that in the teaching game, that is the only way you can keep yourself ahead.

Although she has decided to remain in the United States for the next few years to earn enough money to pay down her law school debt, Maylie said that she is still open to the possibility of going back to Jamaica in 10 or 15 years. "I interned with the Jamaican consulate in New York last summer, and I know that there are a lot of deportation cases here. So I would like to go back and help with those issues or with some other human rights issues," she said, "but in terms of living there forever, I'm not sure anymore. I feel more secure in America now."

The View From Port of Spain

All six of the teachers I interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago were recruited to teach in New York City's public schools in 2001.

Angela Nestle,* c. 60, my hostess in Trinidad and Tobago and the only teacher I interviewed in both Brooklyn and Trinidad and Tobago.

Kamaria Presley,* c. 65, a math teacher who returned home after 7 years.

Gloria Prescott,* 62, an elementary teacher from Tobago who stayed for 2 years and then returned home to care for an ailing parent and become a Christian minister.

Sting McDonald,* 66, and English and Social Studies teacher I interviewed at his home in Trinidad and Tobago; recruited in 2001, and returned 8½ years later.

Ruth Baylor, c. 60, who taught elementary school in New York for 4 years and then had to return when a principal gave her an "Unsatisfactory" review.

Cynthia Jericho,* 54, a current New York City middle school English teacher who has lived apart from her husband for more than 12 years.

I interviewed six of New York City's Caribbean teachers during my 2-week sojourn to Trinidad and Tobago in the summer of 2013. Angela,* my hostess, was the only teacher I interviewed in both New York and Trinidad. I also interviewed Kamaria,* who left New York after several years because of difficulties with a principal; Gloria,* who returned after a few years to tend to an ailing parent; Sting,* one of only two male teachers I interviewed, who returned after harassment by a principal who was subsequently dismissed for incompetence; Ruth,* who ran afoul of an unsatisfied principal; and Cynthia,* who like Angela, continues to teach in New York City to this day, but at a heavy cost to her family.

Angela Nestle,* about 60 years old and a native of Trinidad, had been teaching special education in Brooklyn for 12 years at the time when she invited me to Trinidad, so that I could meet more teachers. She hosted me in her home in Trinidad and Tobago for 2 weeks, from July 22 to August 5, 2013, to give me a chance to learn more about the country and to meet some teachers who had been recruited in 2001 but who had chosen to return home for good after staying for fewer years than Angela had. She met me at the Port of Spain airport with a couple of her dearest old friends, Sharon* and Harry.* Sharon is the godmother of Angela's daughter, and her husband Harry insisted on carrying my big suitcase to their car, which he used to drive us to Angela's house. Angela is proud that she owns her three bedroom, one bath single family home in Maloney Gardens. It is a government housing project consisting of large apartment buildings, single family homes, and townhouses about one hour by bus from Port of Spain. In addition to extensive bus, maxi taxi, and private taxi service, the planned neighborhood also boasts a post office, a library, a soccer pitch, a Roman Catholic church, a small outdoor amphitheater, and even an indoor mini-mall with two small grocery stores, a bakery, a currency exchange, a take-away restaurant, and several small shops.

Angela had originally intended to give me the royal purple guest bedroom without air conditioning, but seeing how I wilted and burned so easily in the pounding sun, and knowing me to be subject to migraines, she took pity on me and let me stay in her own lime green master bedroom, the only air conditioned room in the house, taking the much hotter guest room for herself. We started each of our days with a savory breakfast such as sardines or avocados with eggs, and Angela explained to me that this was the much healthier way Trinidadians prefer to start the day, rather than the sugary breakfasts so many Americans appear to favor. She noted that the box of raisin bran she keeps in her kitchen is only for those rare occasions when she finds she has run out of better things to eat. This latter would be taken with evaporated milk reconstituted with tap water, fresh milk being another item Angela said most Trinidadians don't find much use for. After a couple of days, she grew weary of preparing our breakfasts and so asked me what I could fix for us, but then she did not really care for the French toast I prepared, even though I had sprinkled only the lightest dusting of brown sugar on it. After that we went back to our usual avocados, which I agreed were really much tastier.

Angela's house was more or less barren, having sat empty for a few months. One of her nephews and his family had been living in it rent free for a few years until Angela's older son, Augustus, came down for one of his frequent business trips in the spring and persuaded Angela to ask their relatives to move out so that they could begin renovating the property in earnest, making it more attractive and convenient for Angela's retirement years. In the meantime, the only regular resident had been a Rottweiler named Max, a fierce guard dog who was forbidden residence by her nephew's new landlord. (Never a dog person, rooming with this big scary dog was a small daily terror for me.) One of Augustus's closest friends, whom Angela referred to as her "third son," spent several days at the house helping Angela make needed improvements such

as a new water tank for the roof, and the installation of new curtain rods for the curtains Angela brought from Brooklyn. We could not just install the curtain rods ourselves with a hammer or screwdriver, because a special drill was needed to penetrate the hurricane proof walls. I also wanted to be helpful, so I put up Angela's new apple kitchen curtains, de-cluttered and lined her kitchen drawers, and repurposed a rusty but sturdy metal table as a television stand which I visually improved by draping it with one of the dark purple curtains I had brought as a housewarming gift. (It turns out I had misunderstood Angela's favorite decorating color is green, not purple. She is trying to get rid of all the purple her nephew's wife liked so much, and replace it with the cheerful shades of green and blue she strongly prefers. But the purple curtain did look nice under the television set.)

In addition to completing many small household improvements in the way of painting, decorating, plumbing and electricity, Angela and Augustus want to install a new kind of roof as soon as possible, and possibly also expand the property by adding a second floor. Such new roofs and expansions have popular throughout Maloney Gardens since the neighborhood was first established, and Angela bought into it, in 1984. In addition to helping her make plans for and work on her house, Angela's son also pursues a number of business ventures on his frequent trips to their home country. He is a highly trained, skilled, and popular Caribbean style d.j., and he practices this craft at the annual Mardi Gras and at other major public festivals throughout the year. He also pursues a "suitcase trade" in New York fashions, which he brings with him from the north, and then sells along with a business associate and close friend who manages a small clothing store for him in a neighborhood close to Maloney Gardens. This "suitcase trade" clothing store is actually housed in a converted one family house that has been divided into several such very small businesses; and while I was visiting, Augustus's business associate there

called to report that an old human skull had just been found buried in the yard in a ritualistic way. Those concerned chose to shrug this off, not bothering to report it to the authorities and attributing it to the obeah (traditional West African style folk magic) practices that are common to the islands.

My first morning at Angela's house, I asked her if she thought it would be quite safe for me to go for a walk by myself in her neighborhood, and she told me to just wait for her that first time, so that she could take me all around and introduce me to some of the dozens if not hundreds of friendly neighbors and neighbor friends she has throughout Maloney Gardens. We set out that first time, with me drenched in sunscreen and holding my sunbrella aloft, and she took me around several of the blocks and as far as the mall and the church and back, stopping to speak with people all along the way. She noted that many of the people we were talking to were lifelong friends of her children, all three of whom had been born and raised in Maloney Gardens until the family's 2001 immigration north, and she said, "Now they know you are with me, Augustus's mother, so you will be safe." After that, I took several walks by myself around the neighborhood, especially in the morning before it got too hot, noting the many improvements people had made to their brightly colored, lushly landscaped dwellings, and noting, too, the frequent use of spiritual flags displayed to attract various kinds of good fortune into the households. When I walked alone, people would greet me if I greeted them, and several people smiled at me and advised me to "have a blessed day."

Spirituality seemed ever present everywhere I went in Trinidad and Tobago, and not less so in Angela's home. She began each day by reading a small pamphlet called the Daily Word, a periodical published under the auspices of the Unity Church, the same denomination where she regularly attends Sunday services in Brooklyn. The Daily Word offers quite literally a thought

provoking and usually quite comforting word each day, along with a brief Bible passage and suggestions for further biblical reading. Once she saw me taking in interest in this practice of hers, Angela began handing the Daily Word and the Bible over to me each morning after she was finished with them. We both enjoyed the way each Daily Word seemed so well suited to our daily plans and the conversations we were having with different teachers about their American odyssey. “Divine Order,” for example, was one of the Daily Words that seemed to speak to us, as Angela and several other teachers said they felt it was divine order that had directed their steps northward in 2001. Angela said she even suspected it was divine order that had put me in her path one summer earlier, when I had gone to New York City seeking subjects to work with me on my global education dissertation.

Angela and I attended mass twice together at the Church of the Incarnation, the small church in her neighborhood, while I was visiting her - one early Thursday morning mass, and one regular Sunday mass. This is the same church she raised her children in, a modern concrete building that her younger son described as looking like a spaceship from a 1960s sci fi film. Angela says regular church attendance helps her feel “centered.” She said she struggled to find a comparable Roman Catholic church when she first arrived in Brooklyn, and soon found a church home there at the Unity Pyramid of Truth, where she also brought me to the service when I visited her there.

Angela practices her faith every day in many actions I observed throughout our time together. Constantly telephoning and visiting, being telephoned and being visited, Angela is always reaching out to others, to teach and to help and to celebrate life with others. Over the years, over the decades, even, she has worked to stay in close contact with many of the people she has helped over the years, and everywhere we went in Trinidad, she kept bumping into all

kinds of people, but especially fellow teachers and former students, who were clearly overjoyed to see her and to hug her. One former student, a petite, developmentally disabled lady about 50 years of age, was particularly pleased when she learned Angela was back in the neighborhood, and she visited Angela every morning, asking for new homework assignments and chattering about her news.

Coincidentally, Angela's popularity with her former students had recently been publicly celebrated in a large public sporting event that was covered by a local newspaper, the Trinidad and Tobago Mirror, Friday, May 31, 2013. A full page photo essay ran on page 37 that day, entitled "Spills and thrills at Arima Velodrome." The accompanying captions explained that the "Memisa Home for the Handicap," where Angela had taught developmentally delayed adults for many years, had hosted a special "fun and sports day" at the Arima Velodrome, a large sports venue. According to the article, several of the teams carried the names of favorite former teachers, including one named "Team Angela Nesbitt." Since Angela had been away in Brooklyn teaching at the time of the event, one of her friends had kept a copy of the newspaper to show her, and she then showed it to me.

Our first day, Tuesday, July 23, 2013 was Farm Day. Angela's old friend Jenny joined us at a central rendezvous point, after we had taken a private taxi and then a "maxi taxi" to make it into the center of Arima, a nearby small town. I had repeatedly asked Angela if I ought to rent a car to facilitate our travels together, and she had repeatedly hemmed and hawed and put me off. On this day, I began to learn why, as Angela taught me how to use the public transportation and showed me how she called around to her many friends and cobbled together rides as needed. "I wanted to make you one of the people," Angela explained. I quickly found she was right, I did

see many more people using public transportation, and I felt more “one of them” than I would have had I been driving around in an air conditioned rental car.

June, one of Angela's “parents,” as she calls them, meaning the parents of her former students, picked us up in her car near the Hi Lo grocery store in the town center of Arima. First we went to the school where Angela used to teach. It is called the Memisa Day Training Center, and it is also in Arima, but out in the countryside, in Waller Field, property that once belonged to a U.S. military base. After visiting the school, where half a dozen profoundly retarded middle aged men crowded around Angela in overjoyed recognition, asking to be taken to ride the horses, we went to June's farm. June and her husband Tom, her daughter Nicole, her son Garvin, and her adopted granddaughter Candice live there. Garvin is one of Angela's former students from the day training center. He is now a beekeeper, in addition to raising some pigs and working on his parents’ farm, and his mother says she expects his beekeeping will earn him his financial independence within the next 5 years or so. On the farm we plucked and ate fruit straight from the trees. We ate mangoes, Julie mangoes, popo, which is also called papaya, pomsitae, five finger, which is also called star fruit, fat pork, and chennet. There were also cashew trees, but the season had mostly passed.

Angela is a steelpan music fanatic, a “pan nut,” as she calls herself. She escorted me to a pan concert held in a large Roman Catholic church when I visited her in Brooklyn during the spring. The Brooklyn pan concert featured a young Trinidad and Tobago pan master, who had been a protégé of the great pan master Ellie Manette, leading a small group of younger pan artists in performing Baroque and Renaissance music. The church choir also performed several songs and I met another 2001-recruited Caribbean teacher and her son performing there. That was also when Angela began my pan appreciation education, explaining to me that pan was invented in

her homeland in the 1920s, when local musicians refashioned discarded oil drums into the only new musical instrument invented in the twentieth century. These steel drums were further refined for the next twenty years, and the genre took flight in 1945 as part of the worldwide rejoicing at the end of the Second World War.

While I was visiting her in Trinidad and Tobago, she and her dear old teacher friends Kamaria and Sharon along with Sharon's husband, Harry, brought me along to Panorama 2013, a huge steelpan competition held the evening of July 30 as part of the ongoing Emancipation Day preparatory celebrations at the Queen's Park in Port of Spain. The Queen's Park Savannah, a large park at the heart of the capital city, is a popular year round attraction for locals and tourists alike, and the regular venue for many large public outdoor performances and other events. The Panorama concert featured a dozen or so larger steelpan orchestras from all over the country, flaunting their formidable skills and specialties in a spirit both celebratory and competitive. Angela was thrilled to hear so many great pan musicians playing at once. She even wanted to spend my last evening in the country attending yet another major pan event, a huge steelpan parade scheduled to march through the Laventille neighborhood. Nevertheless, I demurred, preferring instead to attend two original local plays at the modern National Academy for the Performing Arts, a space age style glass and steel structure that had opened a little more than one year earlier across from the Queen's Park. One play was a straight retelling of the biblical David and Goliath story, and the other was the story of a married couple facing the temptation to commit adultery. Both plays had a straightforward moral message, and both were peppered with local lingo and Trinbagonian insider references.

In addition to the concerts and plays I attended in person, I also learned a great deal about the culture of Trinidad and Tobago just watching television at Angela's house. She left the

television on about half the time when we were at her home, and she watched it less than half of that time, often chatting on the phone or dozing off in front of the set. Trinbagonian television offerings were quite different from the kind of television widely available in the United States. Angela did not have a cable subscription, so we were restricted to viewing only the free local channels, which seemed to me to be generally more high toned than what ABC, NBC, CBS, and PBS offer in the U.S. First of all, the news programming tended unsurprisingly to focus more on very local Trinbagonian and Caribbean concerns. Something different about the news there was that a wider global awareness was evident, with a more critical reporting of global wars that repeatedly highlighted the number of casualties on both sides, rather than just the number of military casualties on one favored side, as is customary in American reporting. Second, the evening news featured several personal appeals for monetary support. For example, a single mother with five children asked for help in repairing a collapsing wall of her house, and a performing arts teacher asked for money to keep his traditional African dance school open. Finally and in important contrast to typical American television, there was an abundance of educational programming geared towards informing the citizenry about their national history, precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial. Since I was there in the days leading up to their much beloved Emancipation Day celebration, I along with any other viewers had many opportunities to learn more about the history of that day, and about the global story of the African diaspora. Trinidad and Tobago was the first country to declare on August 1, 1985 that they would henceforth honor that day as one commemorative of the end of slavery, and the country has been celebrating with festivals and concerts and parades on that day and on the days leading up to it ever since. I don't think anyone watching television for even a little while that week could have missed this and many such locally important history lessons. The commitment to edify and uplift

viewers was unmistakable, and quite unlike the more commercialized, low brow approaches increasingly popular in some other television markets.

It was watching this educational and uplifting local television at Angela's house that I first heard a live rendition of the popular calypso song, "Education is essential," first written, sung, and made famous by Mighty Sparrow. Mighty Sparrow, a.k.a. Sparrow, a.k.a. Birdie, was born Slinger Francisco in Grenada in 1935, but he was raised in Port of Spain from the age of one. The words to this popular tune express the great value that many citizens of this country place on education:

Lyrics to "Education is essential"

By Mighty Sparrow

Children go to school and learn well
Otherwise later on in life you will catch real hell
Without an education in your head
Your whole life will be all misery you better off dead
There is simply no room in this whole wide world
For an uneducated little boy or girl
Don't allow idle companions to lead you astray
To earn tomorrow you have to learn today (Sparrow, 2008)

When the New York public schools went down to Port of Spain to recruit Trinidadian teachers in the summer of 2001, they must have understood that they were recruiting from a country with a long history of praising and prioritizing education. Those who chose to go may have had reason to feel pride that their hard earned educational excellence was being recognized by these representatives of American public education.

I had flown down to Trinidad and Tobago in the hope of meeting more such teachers, particularly those whom I could no longer meet in Brooklyn, because they no longer lived there. Every day Angela called around to try and help me meet 2001-recruited teachers who chose to return to Trinidad and Tobago after a few years, and I was finally able to meet and interview four

such teachers in this way, plus one more teacher who, like Angela, is still teaching in New York City, but happened to be summering in her native country. One returned teacher whom Angela really wanted me to meet repeatedly refused Angela's telephone entreaties, adamantly declaring, "Those university types just talk and talk, and they never help anything." Angela was sorry to have to relate this to me, because in her opinion this particular teacher's career was ruined by the unfair treatment she had received after her 2001 recruitment to New York.

Angela gave me at least two reasons for her willingness to go to such lengths to help me with this project. First of all, it seemed to her to be an expression of divine order that I showed up last summer eager to listen right at the time that she felt eager to relate stories of the teachers' recruitment experiences. Second, and as I heard her explain to a number of teachers she telephoned seeking interviewees for me, Angela valued the possibility of making a written record of these teachers' experiences so that both they and other teachers could better help themselves and one another. She hoped such a record would especially facilitate the teachers' ongoing pursuits of green card and citizenship applications for themselves and their children, as well as their abiding battle for those human rights which could only be claimed in tandem with citizenship rights.

At the time when Angela decided to accept the offer to teach in New York City, she was growing increasingly frustrated with the politics of special education in her home country. One of 14 special education teachers chosen to work with a World Bank initiative to improve special needs education in Trinidad and Tobago, she found that she and her colleagues were only able to screen students for disabilities, often without subsequently being able to place them in appropriately supportive educational settings. "We referred them, but then the children couldn't go anywhere, because there really was no place for them," she said, explaining that special needs

accommodations were undeveloped or underdeveloped in her country at that time. She lamented that she and the other World Bank appointed special education teachers travelled all around the country seeking to work with school guidance counselors to increase understanding of special needs, “but they treated us like secretaries. We weren't getting anywhere. It would have been career Siberia if I went back to Mimesa (her previous job working with developmentally delayed adults), so this was my personal incentive to move to New York.” Although she said she found this lack of support for special needs students exasperating, she said one thing she did appreciate was the respect and support she enjoyed from the parents of those students she was actually able to teach.

Angela had some other concerns at the time of her recruitment, and she often joked that when she left Trinidad and Tobago she owed money to “everyone but the money lender!” Her major concern, though, her greatest worry, was her youngest son, Arthur's health. His father had been unsympathetic to the debilitating migraines that drove the boy to hide his head under a cover in his bed for hours and even days on end, according to Angela. “His father would go in there and shout, 'Get up!' and he would bang a pan over his head,” she said, adding, “He didn't understand.”

Angela did understand, though, that her very bright youngest child, age 9 at the time of her recruitment, was not faking it when, from the age of 6, he began to complain of headaches so painful he said he can remember even wishing for death when he was an otherwise happy, well-adjusted 7-year-old. She said she knew something had to be wrong for her most studious child to stay away from school and in his darkened room for days on end, but she had exhausted all the medical avenues possible in Trinidad and Tobago, and she figured there would be opportunities to bring him to more specialized doctors in New York.

Angela also understood that New York might also offer better opportunities for her two older children, Augustus, then 19, and Angela, 16. They had both recently “done their O levels” at that time, which means they had taken national examinations and tried to pass into one of the better college preparatory high schools. Neither had done particularly well on these exams, both had gone onto mediocre high schools, and both expressed more interest in more vocational rather than purely academic pursuits. Augustus wanted to cultivate his skills in computer draftsmanship and electronics, and Angela dreamed of a career as a chef. Angela explained that although tertiary education had recently been made free in Trinidad and Tobago, all the technical education money had been invested in the southern part of the country, too far from where she and her children lived near Port of Spain, too far for Augustus to commute. And while a degree in hospitality was a local possibility for Angela, chef training was not offered.

So to help her two older children get the kinds of education they wanted, to help her younger child find better medical care for his migraines, and to put an end to her own career frustration as a World Bank special education specialist, Angela felt she had many compelling reasons to leave her home country and start anew in New York City. In addition, she explained that the United States is seen as the big brother to many countries in the world, including Trinidad and Tobago, offering expert human rights advice. “We ended corporal punishment because we were following the U.S. model,” she said, “so there was a trust there. It seemed to me that America was the beacon of human rights, and divine order just pushed me to go there.” Accordingly, she borrowed TT\$20,000 (about US\$4,000 at the time) for four plane tickets from Port of Spain to New York, leaving about US\$1,000 to start their new lives in the U.S.

In the ensuing 12 years, Angela says she feels good about many of the consequences of her decision to move herself and her children to New York City. Her older son, 33, earned a

certificate in sound engineering and is currently working in that field. He is also now a U.S. citizen, a status he gained by marriage to a U.S. citizen, and he has an 8-year-old daughter. Her daughter, 28, completed her chef's training with a specialty in pastry, and she has an 8-year-old son. She does not, however, have her U.S. citizenship or her green card, so she is now in the country illegally. Her younger son, 23, has completed more than 2 years of college and is currently working as a political activist, representing the demands of young immigrants like himself who came to the U.S. legally but who have now “aged out” of legal status and are thus remaining in the country illegally.

As far as her personal goals, Angela expressed satisfaction that she has paid off all of her debts, paid off her house in Trinidad and Tobago, secured a mortgage for her brownstone three-flat in Brooklyn, and secured a retirement salary that can support her comfortably whenever she decides to return home. “The only thing I didn't get to do was my Ph.D.,” she said, adding that she is still considering earning her terminal degree in special education with the University of Sheffield, an English institution that provides a number of degrees that can be earned at various sites in the Caribbean and elsewhere. “Half a degree from Sheffield is better than a triple degree from anywhere in the U.S., except Harvard,” in Angela's opinion.

Kamaria “Kam” Presley,* age 65, interviewed in D'Abadie, Trinidad and Tobago, at the home of another teacher, July 26, 2013. She chose to return home after 7 years.

Kamaria, who usually goes by a nickname such as Kam, is a secondary math teacher recruited to teach in Brooklyn in 2001. She stayed for 7 years, and then chose to return to her home in Port of Spain, concluding that it was “not worth it” to stay longer, not worth the rising blood pressure she felt was caused by the stress of the work. She said she was tired of dealing with English teachers who did not seem to know proper English, and math teachers who did not seem to know

much math. She said she was also dismissed by her last principal for “insubordination,” but she contends that she was never insubordinate, only inquisitive, challenging needless systemic dysfunction as she saw appropriate. She noted that the same principal who dismissed her was dismissed herself 2 years later.

Born in Port of Spain in 1945, Kamaria recalls attending an inner city crèche, or preschool, that was a lot of fun. She said that throughout elementary school, she enjoyed the feeling that she was “not confined,” a condition she contrasts with the constant monitoring of children she observed in New York City. “We were more independent,” she said. “We were trusted to do all kinds of things.” She said she was raised in a “normal, working class family.” Her father was a shoemaker, a profitable occupation at that time, and her mother was a “housewife.” She was the only girl, with three brothers, and she recalls that in her family growing up, the focus was always on education.

Although she is not a practicing Catholic now, Kamaria was raised as a Roman Catholic.

You had to go through all the rituals, baptism, confirmation, so I did. But not now. I sincerely believe that we as African people are too tied down by Christian theology controlling our minds. We can't be ourselves as a people as long as we let other people set our standards. That's a long time that I have thought that way, but as a child, I did all of it. It never touched me, though, the Catholic rituals. I was exposed to different religions, Baptist, Moravian, Seventh Day Adventist. My aunties took me to all those different churches. But in my twenties, I decided it wasn't right for me. I think I'm agnostic.

Kamaria nevertheless taught in Catholic schools and sent all four of her children to them, believing they provided a high quality of education.

She went onto a good secondary school and then attended the teachers' college and soon after began working and got married. She and her husband raised their four children, two boys and two girls, together and she acquired more teaching experience and more training. She is proud that all four of her children were “national school winners,” and that they have now gone

on to meaningful and challenging careers. Her oldest daughter trained as a brain surgeon in England, but is currently staying at home with two children. Her older son also studied in England, but has since returned to Trinidad and Tobago. Her other daughter studied alternative energy but is currently moving to France for further graduate study, possibly a Ph.D., and her other son is in business in Trinidad and Tobago. Kamaria and her husband divorced when their youngest daughter was still high school, and because the girl was living with her father at the time, Kamaria felt free to accept the recruitment offer from the New York schools when it came in 2001.

“We rely on extended families in the Caribbean,” Kamaria explained.

The nuclear family is not such a focus. We have matriarchal families where all the children are cared for by many people. We don't have much foster care, because it is not needed, except for extreme cases. Usually there are enough adult relatives to care for a child.

The teachers' college she attended was residential, so that was the first time she lived away from home. She said that added to her maturity, but she and the other students were still based with their families, still choosing to spend as much time as possible with their families, and then moving back home to live with their families when they graduated.

The family support when I was growing up was great. Really, we had it all, so many family members to look out for us, and it all contributed to your success. There were always people around encouraging you, especially if you were doing well in secondary school.

She contrasted this with the very different family situations of New York City students, children who often had to go home to an empty apartment.

When asked what was her first observation of New York City's public schools, Kamaria replied, “Wow! These people are stupid! The books were not suitable, the children were running wild, there was so much needless infrastructure, administration. They were paying lip service to

all these facilities and services, but to me it was just madness.” Kamaria said that the great irony for her was that throughout her teachers' college training and through many years of ongoing professional development in her home country, she had been studying “the way it should be” according to the latest American educational research.

All the research was American. Everything we did in Trinidad and Tobago was based on American research. But here was America, I was in an American school system and I saw that none of that research was really being respected. It was just madness, and I had to call it American madness.

When asked if she had suggestions to fix this madness, Kamaria was not hopeful.

It's a capitalist system. That is the problem. The whole system is capitalist. Capitalism ain't going to let it [the current system of educating children in America's public schools] go, 'cause it makes money. People have got to resist capitalism if they want to get serious about fixing the system and really educating the children.

Asked for one or two examples of how the system is capitalist, Kamaria noted the many useless and inappropriate books that are regularly purchased and shipped to schools where they cannot be put to good use; or where there are already full sets of perfectly useful books in good condition, that will subsequently be sent into useless storage for lengthy unspecified periods, until they are eventually remaindered and recycled, very much underused. She also noted that the lawyers assigned to help the teachers with their visas and green card applications seemed more interested in collecting their fees and extending their possibilities for making money than in actually helping the teachers make good progress with their applications. With her blood pressure now well under control, Kamaria refused to continue discussing what she considers to be a currently hopeless situation, i.e. the iron grip of capitalism on American public education.

Her analysis of what's wrong with American public schools and what might be done to fix them reminded me of another Calypso song by the Mighty Sparrow, this one first recorded in 1983:

“Capitalism Gone Mad,”

By Mighty Sparrow

You got to be a millionaire or some kind of *petit-bourgeoisie*
Any time you living here in this country
You got to be in skullduggery, making your money illicitly
To live like somebody in this country
It's outrageous and insane, them crazy prices in Port of Spain
And like the merchants going out dey brain
And the working man, like he only toiling in vain.

Chorus:

Where you ever hear, a television for seven thousand
Quarter million for lil piece of land
A pair of sneakers - two hundred dollars
Eighty, ninety thousand for motor cars
At last here in Trinidad, we see capitalism gone mad
It's sad and getting more bad because, *doudou*, capitalism gone mad!

To provide for your family today on your present salary
Is an impossibility in this country
So many bills to pay, there is no conceivable way
To save for a rainy day in this country
Avariciousness to be precise, is why every damn thing so overpriced
Big business making everybody feel
Government give them an open license to steal.

Chorus:

Would you believe me, one nylon panty is nineteen ninety
Twenty dollars for some baby milk
The cheapest jersey cost over sixty
Two hundred and change a yard for silk
It hard here in Trinidad, lord have mercy, capitalism gone mad
It's sad, things getting more bad, oh lord, capitalism gone mad!

To buy a pack of cigarette does leave you with a hole in your wallet
And money is so hard to get in this country
Necessity or luxuries, it doesn't matter what the item is
They charging anything they please in this country
Primary school books prices lewd
Is highway robbery, the price of food
All hopes and dreams elude the poor man
But politicians still expect good work attitude.

Chorus:

Just imagine this, the cheapest coffin over three thousand
Not even dying today easy
Thousands of dollars for the undertakers
So you could get a spot in the cemetery
It hard here in Trinidad, oh lord, capitalism gone mad
The gladness that once we had is gone because capitalism gone mad!

You got to have heavy contact, know how to move up in society
To make any kind of impact in this country
You got to know how to gyp the field
How to scheme and swindle properly
Perfect the art of wheel and deal in this country
I say, survival in this land isn't easy for no man
With unemployment and high inflation
Some of we go dead before the end of this recession.

Chorus:

Wey de hell is dis, a Mango Julie costing three fifty
Forty dollars for one watermelon
Half your salary for fish, meat and poultry
Time you buy greens all your money done.
It hard here in Trinidad, lord, have mercy, capitalism gone mad
It sad and getting more hard, put a hand, lord, capitalism gone mad!
(Sparrow, M., 2002; lyrics transcribed as I heard them on the 2002 *Quintessential Mighty Sparrow* CD I bought in Port of Spain)

Like all Trinbagonians, Kamaria would be well familiar with this hit song that has remained popular until today. It is a good example of the way this popular art form—calypso—encourages the common people to think critically about the system they find themselves in. While Mighty Sparrow's lyrics focus on the particular economic challenges Trinbagonians were facing in their own country in 1983, his words nevertheless reminded me of the way Kamaria and the other Caribbean teachers I spoke with analyzed their New York Public Schools experience.

Kamaria said that she did not anticipate that the American system would be so broken at the time when she decided to accept the recruitment offer. She said it was a good time in her life to try something new, and she looked forward to the opportunity to expand her personal and

professional horizons, to “increase my life experiences and learn more about a different school system.” She said her children were well grown and well situated at that time, so she felt free to move in this new direction, a direction that then proved both personally and professionally enriching and disappointing. “I’m also glad I went,” she said with a smile. “I learned many new things and met interesting people. And New York is still my favorite place to shop!”

Asked what advice she has for other Caribbean teachers considering a similar move, Kamaria said, “Make sure you have a good support base. I had many relatives in New York, and that made all the difference for me. Don’t depend on the system itself. You need your fellow Caribbeans, or you will sink without that support.”

“Blacks don’t have a history of standing together in the New York public schools,” Kamaria said. She surmises that it might be because they went through this system, actually came up through it and were educated by this system themselves when they were younger, that they don’t see how broken it is. She speculated that that might be why they appear to feel so threatened when an outsider comes in and criticizes the system. “We [the 2001 recruits] came in, and after 2 years most of us had passed all the exams, and that created tension. Other teachers and principals, the Americans, were often unsupportive of us.”

Kamaria observed that in the Caribbean, there is no cursing in the classrooms, neither from students nor from teachers; but she said this was not the case in New York City. She said she regularly heard other teachers, American teachers, cursing in front of the children and even at the children. “Rough, crude behavior was the norm from everyone,” she said, adding, “There seemed to be a belief that ‘You can’t be a gentleman in New York City.’ I did not like how people degraded the children with this verbal abuse.” In response to verbal invective from her own students, Kamaria said she often responded with a witty comeback such as “Many happy

returns!” or “I’m too old for you to get me pregnant!” After the laughter such remarks usually elicited, Kamaria would take advantage of the teachable moment to explain to her students that it was very important for them to address one another with respectful language.

The children were surprised when I would use the words please and thank you in speaking with them. They said, “Why please and thank you?” because they were not used to being spoken to in that way. I had to explain to them, to teach them, that I was not really asking when I spoke that way, but rather that I was being polite.

Kamaria also observed that, unlike any classroom she had taught in in her native Trinidad and Tobago, in the New York City public schools, “The children feel they could hit you, the teacher.” She said she overheard some boys bragging about how they could slap her if they wanted to, and then a girl responded to them in a menacing voice, saying, “You ain’t touching my teacher.” No student ever did hit her, but sometimes some students behaved badly, and she would occasionally request that a dean remove a student from her class. One such student returned with the dean after a month away, apologizing and even begging her, saying, “You are the only person I understand math with. I can’t learn math with any other teacher.” She said she readmitted that student and there were no more issues with her after that. She said many students praised her for her ability to help them make progress in math. One boy told her, “You make us think and solve problems. The other teachers don’t do that.” A girl from Guyana told Kamaria, “Nobody could teach me but you.”

Kamaria said her first 3 years teaching in New York City were more enjoyable, largely because she was working under competent school leadership. Her last 4 years, however, were increasingly stressful, which she attributes to the inefficiency and incompetence of the principal who finally dismissed her. The principal supervising her at that time did not seem to appreciate the exceptional work she was doing with the children, Kamaria said, never giving her credit for her superior classroom management, positive relationships with students, or her students’

excellent exam results which far exceeded what was required. The principal did, however, find time to request more and more paperwork, and to refuse Kamaria's request to be moved out of a windowless, moldy classroom that she felt was making her sick. She said that, after being forced to move to that classroom, she experienced almost daily nose bleeds and a constant feeling of malaise. "That principal could have cost me my life. My blood pressure just went higher and higher. Any medication I tried to take led to fainting. My health was at risk. And then that principal evaluated me as 'inefficient!'"

Kamaria noted the particular irony of this, because her math skills are highly advanced. She attributes this to what she characterizes as the superior system of math education provided for all students in Trinidad and Tobago, a system she says results in consistently higher math learning in that country than in the United States. "Thank God I had my math there [in Trinidad and Tobago]" she said. "I was amazed by how little math the [U.S.] teachers knew," she said. "An assistant was brought in to my class with no math skills at all. Why bring in an assistant in math who cannot do math? It made no sense."

She noted that that assistant was black, and she observed that deficiencies in math attainment appeared to be more widespread among black teachers and teaching assistants than in their white counterparts. "I went to Brooklyn College for the master of science in math degree," she explained,

and with the black and white teachers that I studied with there, I saw that the white teachers had far superior education mathwise. Again and again in our classes, I saw that the black students could not do the math. The white students could talk about the concepts behind what we were doing, but the black students could not. The black teachers only had drill and practice, they did not have the concepts, they did not have real mastery.

Kamaria thinks that part of the reason her last principal eventually recommended her dismissal was that her salary had gotten too high, high enough to hire two new, inexperienced

teachers once she was let go. “Thinking like that is very shortsighted,” she said. “Not valuing experienced teachers is not the way to improve schools.”

Kamaria returned to Trinidad and Tobago in 2008, 5 years before I met with her and interviewed her there. She appears to be enjoying an idyllic semi-retirement now, tutoring part time to supplement the two modest teachers' retirement incomes she amassed first in her home country and then in New York. She said her main retirement occupation, though, is gardening. She said that she sometimes harvests so many avocados and mangoes that she just drives down to a Saturday farmers' market, opens her trunk, and collects about TT\$200 (about US\$30). She did not stay and work in the United States the requisite 10 years to be entitled to Social Security, but she says for her it was well worth letting go of the possibility of that extra retirement income, because she did not see how she could have recovered her health had she stayed. She is in excellent health and spirits now, spending much of her free time in her Edenic garden, and often spending days on end eating nothing but fruits and vegetables she has grown herself there.

Kamaria was one of the teachers who joined me for an evening of calypso music in the specially constructed venue named “Okowole Village” in Queens Park, part of the several days of live outdoor entertainment leading up to Emancipation Day August 1. Every year the Emancipation Day Committee chooses the name of a different African village to honor the ancestors of the African diaspora. On the evening of July 27, 2013, we danced the night away to a lineup of young and old calypsonian luminaries, and Kamaria was especially happy to dance when any of Lord Kitchener's songs were performed, and when the great elder statesman of Calypso, Mighty Shadow (a.k.a. Winston Bailey, born in Trinidad in 1941), performed the culminating songs for a rapturous audience of well over a thousand concert goers. Current

Calypso stars Black Stalin (a.k.a. Leroy Calliste, born in Trinidad in 1941) and Kizzy Ruiz (born in Trinidad in 1982) also performed, along with a lineup of up-and-coming calypsonians.

Since Kamaria's apartment in the hilly Port of Spain suburb of Carenage is much closer to Queen's Park than Angela's home is, she hosted us overnight there after the concert, and then treated us to her homemade bake [whole wheat bread] and saltfish [a salad of salty dried fish with tomatoes, onions, and fresh herbs], plus avocados plucked ripe from her garden. She also gave us a tour of her property, which she expanded from a single family home to three separate dwellings, all suitable for rental and all overlooking her lush garden. She said she was able to finance this expansion using the income she earned during her 7-year sojourn in New York City. She was renting out one of the apartments to a college student recently, and she has plans to market one or two of them to Brooklyn retirees in the near future. She figures the \$US500 or so per week she plans to charge such retirees would be a good deal for them and for her. Kamaria also joined me and several other teachers on our midnight trek to watch the bright blue leatherback turtles hatch their eggs at Matura Beach. She said she is sure to return there soon with two of her grandchildren, who live nearby and spend as much time as possible with her.

After we had spent so many enjoyable hours together, some of it proceeding formally through my interview protocol but most of it just “liming,” which is Trinidad and Tobago lingo for relaxing with friends, after she had graciously shared her home and her food and so much of her country's rich cultural and natural offerings with me, Kamaria asked me to do her one favor: She asked me to return to my university and to tell them there that she and her family and friends in Trinidad and Tobago were “not swinging from the trees!” Jenny, another teacher I spent quite a bit of time with but did not interview, chimed in to say,

Yes, I know just what you mean. I met so many Americans who think we are just swinging from the trees down here. And my students still ask me why I speak such good

English! What else would I speak? That is our language here. You go back to your university and tell them.

It clearly pained these cultured and articulate teachers to recall the many times that Americans, especially black Americans had stereotyped them in these ignorant and insulting ways. I could see they felt hurt as they spoke of this, and I felt hurt for them. I responded somewhat feebly that I think a big part of the problem is that American education in geography is so woefully deficient, and Kamaria said tersely, “Well, go tell them now. We speak English, and we don’t swing from trees.”

Sting McDonald,* 66, and English and Social Studies teacher I interviewed at his home in Trinidad and Tobago; recruited in 2001, and returned 8½ years later. I interviewed Sting at his new single family home, which he has been putting the finishing touches on, in a suburb about forty minutes east of Port of Spain, in his native Trinidad and Tobago. Before we began the interview, he gave me a tour of the cool and spacious three-bedroom, two bath house, with high ceilings and tile floors, all in shades of tan and sand. This is the second home he owns, his first being in San Fernando, in southwest Trinidad, where he grew up. He doesn’t have any furniture in his new house yet, except for the old metal chairs he dragged out onto the covered front verandah for our interview.

Sting was recruited to teach in New York City in 2001, and he returned to his native country 8½ years later, in his 42nd year of teaching, shortly after receiving an evaluation of “Unsatisfactory” from a principal.

What Sting remembers most clearly about his preschool years was that he liked the girls. He said he went to a private preparatory school for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, from the age of three, or maybe as young as two, he cannot be sure anymore. The school was in San Fernando, the same town where he grew up. It was a well-established school that two older

women had been running for decades. After that, he went to the normal or public primary school for “standards one through five,” which would be like the American grades one through five. He did well in examination required at the end of standard five, and that meant he did not have to attend standard six but rather was permitted to attend high school right away. He attended the polytechnical high school for 2 or 3 years, and then he matriculated to St. Stephen’s College in Prince’s Town, not far from his home. He described this as a “notable Anglican Catholic school,” and after doing well on the examinations he completed as a student there, he went straight to teacher’s college.

Sting recalls that he was not allowed to complete these examinations and move onto teachers’ college as soon as he had hoped, because his older sister was a teacher at St. Stephen’s, and she had very particular ideas about how he should be educated.

I was denied by her from doing the exams when I wanted to, she kept me back a year. Our family was matrilineal, our culture is that way, and my sisters were very much in charge. She taught math, Spanish, French, and Latin. I was good at my subjects, and when I was left back a year because of her, I cried, the last time I cried until I got that U in New York. Another time, my sister hit me with a Latin book, she hit me in the head because she said I didn’t do my Latin homework, but I was the only one in the whole class who ever did the Latin homework. That time I cried from 11 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. and then I fell asleep and when I woke up, everyone was gone and I was all alone in the school. It was out of rage that I slept so long. My sister was hard.

Sting was one of 10 children in his family, five boys and five girls. The birth order was four girls, him, four more boys, and then one more girl.

It was definitely matrilineal. My older sisters controlled the whole show. They were all brilliant, and they all did well in school and at university. We were categorized this way: The McDonald girls were brilliant, but the boys were “not as.” But my brothers and I did well, too. One became a physicist, and one was associated with Eric Williams [the first prime minister of the country]. That one complained he knew more than our sisters. I used to correct my sister’s teaching, and she got mad when I did that. You had to listen to the teacher, not question her.

Sting's father was a chemist with Texaco Oil Co., an American company located in the southern part of the country. His mother had been a nurse trainee, but then she quit that to become a housewife. Sting remembers once breaking his mother's heavy wooden dining table right in half one day when she told him she wanted him to run an errand for her right away.

I was just breaking through a derivation [in some math homework], and I did not want to stop just then, but I had to do what my mother said. I hit that table so hard, I went straight through that strong wooden table.

All the members of Sting's family attended an Anglican church in their town of San Fernando as far back as he can remember, but somewhere along the way his mother also became a Seventh Day Adventist. After that she brought her children with her to that church, but Sting's father was not really a churchgoer. "He always prayed, though," Sting recalls, "and he always gave one tenth of his salary to the church." Sting said he was about 5 or 6 years old when his mother effected the Adventist change, and he was happy about it, because the new church was "less boring than the Anglican church. The Adventists showed films about Rome." Over the years, Sting's sisters tried different churches, including the Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostal churches, and sometimes they took him along. Now he said he only goes to church when he is invited by a friend. "Church is not the thing. It's me and God, that is what matters," he said.

Sports were important to Sting growing up, and he was very good at them. He played cricket, soccer, and table tennis. He ran and he cycled. His father had been a national cyclist for Trinidad and Tobago, so Sting tried to train as a cyclist, too; but the police stopped him on the road (they said it was not safe), and that was the end of his cycling career. He got farther with cricket, playing first for his high school and then for the big clubs. He was also a well-known soccer player, and many years later after he moved to New York, he met a woman who told him she had had a terrible crush on him when he played soccer all those years ago.

She was a psychologist in New York by then,” he said, “and she told me she got licks from her mother for staying away from home to watch me play soccer. She said she had such a crush on me, and I said, “You waited long to say this.”

They were both in their fifties by the time she spoke.

Sportive as he was, Sting remembers being a defender of underdogs throughout his school years.

I could fight. I didn’t like to, but I could. I was always a fair guy, and I didn’t like bullying. My best friend today was a boy I protected daily. Now he’s a multimillionaire, but back then the other boys found him girlish. He became an accountant and he did very well.

Sting said this same desire to help others was part of what drew him to teaching. “I was looking for a challenge, something new.”

Sting remembers his 2 years at Mausica Teachers Training College with fondness. He finished there in 1966, and then he began looking everywhere for a job, in the Cayman Islands or anywhere. He found his first teaching job in his hometown of San Fernando at Marabelle Primary A.C. During his 11 years there, he attended the University of the West Indies night school to earn a bachelor’s degree in economics, and he began teaching high school in 1977. Over the years, Sting has taught high school social studies, history, math, Spanish and English, but his main subjects have been social studies and advanced economics. He also completed a Dip.Ed. at the University of the West Indies, as well as numerous short courses on evaluation and testing, subjects about which he said his American peers did not seem well informed. He said that when the American team came to the Hilton in the summer of 2001 looking for teachers, he was ready for them, and they seemed very happy to meet and recruit him.

Asked about his first observations of New York City schools, Sting said,

It was a rough landing, complete cultural shock. This was supposed to be education! The discipline was not there! I came from such a different environment than this. In my new school, there were fights every day, blood every day. I was trained not to get involved, to

just call security, but when the human situation arises, you intervene. Those are your students and you want to protect them. I saw kids stabbed with pencils, girls pulling hair. I saw that when fights broke out, the security guards disappeared, or they just stood there and watched. It was like a prison.

Over time, Sting said he started to adapt to his new violent work environment, but it still seemed strange to him. His first school was Bushwick High School, where he saw daily fights and rampant indiscipline. “We use uniforms in the Caribbean,” he said.

In New York, the kids wore shorts and weird outfits. Their pants were open. It was not like school at all, to me. At Franklin K. Lane High School, my second school, I saw so much blood, and I parted so many fights, holding students on the ground while security just stood there and watched. They just stood and watched.

Sting said that at his third New York high school, William E. Grady High School in Coney Island, he was forced to work in a moldy, windowless half-a-room with no ventilation whatsoever. Packed in with thirty or more students for three back-to-back periods with no chance to step out for a breath of fresh air, Sting began to get sick.

I suffered. There was a little cupboard in there, I thought it smelled moldy, and I asked for over a month, ‘Could you open it?’ Finally they did, and there was a computer in there, and one coat hanger, and one full sized mirror covered with mold. The computer was covered with mold, too.

He said the janitors took the moldy mirror and computer away, but they never cleaned the closet, a task he was forced to do himself.

This extended exposure to mold in his working environment took a heavy toll on Sting’s health.

I had never been ill in my life, but this classroom made me sick. I developed a throat problem, a mucus problem. After teaching just half a day, I started losing my voice. I went to a doctor and I spent three weeks on antibiotics, but I was still losing my voice. I went to a Jamaican doctor and I told him I had had this dream where I wanted to get off a train and I couldn’t. I became anxious and scared, and I asked for sick leave, but all I got were threatening letters [from his superiors]. Then I fell into a depression. One day I felt so sick, I went into the principal on a snowy day, bundled up and dizzy, to ask for a sub. He made me sit on a little bench in his office, a low bench for little kids, while I talked to him. He was literally looking down on me as I spoke. Usually it should have taken me

half an hour to get home, but it took me two hours that day. I was holding onto lampposts, I had to go slowly and keep resting. Later on I figured out the tablets the Jamaican doctor had given me [for depression] were killing me, were having bad side effects. I was going mentally ill. I was waking up distressed, peeping out my shutters, even thinking thoughts like, ‘Maybe I’m worthless,’ and I had never had that problem before. I saw on television that these were signs of mental unwellness.

Eventually Sting figured out that he had been taking doctor-prescribed steroids, and that all of his most frightening symptoms were attributable to that. When he went to discuss this with the doctor, the doctor suggested that he might like to switch to Valium, at which point Sting decided it was time to switch doctors again. After coming off of the prescribed medicine, Sting began to feel like his old self again, and the prior mold-induced problem had also cleared up.

He had been away on unpaid leave for almost 5 months, and once he returned to teaching, he decided that he would retire soon. That was in 2009. As soon as he got back in the classroom, though, he remembered that “I can’t live without teaching,” so he revoked his retirement plans, happy to back where he belonged. This was around the time that a new principal at his school dropped by his classroom for his first observation of Sting, the one that resulted in the unsatisfactory evaluation. “It was a good class, too,” Sting recalls.

The kids were enthusiastic to answer questions. There were special needs kids in there, and they were included . . . That was a Thursday. Friday I got the U. Monday, I cried with the AP [assistant principal]. Tuesday I left. It hurts me still, I’m still transitioning. You reach out, and you feel isolated.

Sting stayed single all his life. He never married, and he did not have children. He said he was freer than most to decide to move to New York, and then to decide to move back. In his home country, he said he had always felt himself to be a central part of his large family.

I drove the car for everybody. I was the one they called on for that, so they lost that service, the rides to the airport, or for the groceries. I was always there to make you laugh. I dropped around, I checked on people. Once I left, my uncle and aunt didn’t have anyone to drop by.

He said this was the greatest effect his recruitment had on his family, the cessation of his regular visits.

On a wider scale, Sting said the 2001 recruitment represented a significant drawdown of good teachers from Trinidad and Tobago.

Generally, the best were leaving. Even the minister of education at that time, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, she is the prime minister now, she said, “The American government is capturing some of our best teachers.” Capturing, that is the word she used.

He also said Persad-Bissessar tried to stop them from leaving by threatening to take away the retirement pensions they had already earned, but she was not successful.

Sting said that the educational system in New York City is “not accommodating or even effective.” He said that he and the other Caribbean teachers worked very hard to adapt to their new environment, and that whenever difficulties arose, that only made them work even harder. “We worked like that because we knew we were immigrants, and we could be repatriated so easily [because of a principal’s disapproval],” he said.

“Most of us gave up everything to go to New York. I did, too, I sold everything,” Sting said.

Once we got there, the problem was there was not enough guidance. We needed legal advice we didn’t get. The orientation programs they [the school authorities] offered were superficial. We needed more information about the school system and about living in the U.S.

He said that housing remained a problem for him throughout his time teaching in New York, and he felt that the schools should have done more to help new recruits find suitable lodgings,

to guide them to a place of preparedness . . . They just gave us the briefest orientation, with no follow up. They didn’t address issues we had. We were like indentured laborers who could be kicked out because of our visa status.

This vulnerability was quickly apparent to everyone involved, Sting said, and some supervisors seemed eager to take advantage of it. “They looked down on me as an immigrant,

and this surprised me because I was well qualified with many years of successful experience and great evaluations, and I had been recruited to come,” he said. He said this constant sense that he was being treated like an unwelcome, inferior immigrant; or even like an indentured servant who would have to work without full rights for a long, unspecified period, made him feel like he was “always on edge, always under duress.” He said that even though he had three times as much training as most of his New York colleagues, and 33 years of professional experience before going there, he never felt secure in his job. Even after he earned a master’s degree from Brooklyn College, he said he never felt like he was treated like a respected professional.

“If I am recognized as a qualified teacher in the Caribbean, that should be respected in New York City, because the system there is sub-standard. The system there is poor,” Sting said.

The kids there are not being given a fair break, and the teachers are being railroaded. The curriculum is too tight, too scripted. But a teacher needs some flexibility to teach. The teachers and students are being set up to continue doing poorly. One time I was told to make sure every one of my classes was learning exactly the same things at the same time. I knew that didn’t make sense, and I knew I couldn’t answer back. I was told all my students had to get 65% or better on a standardized test, and I knew that was not possible, but I couldn’t answer back. I saw a lot of dishonesty around those rigid expectations. I saw things I never engaged in or indulged in, but I could see why some people were tempted, because it was impossible. I saw people actually erase student answers on tests, and I had no say in that, there was nothing I could do. A lot of kids would have failed, should have failed, but they got passing grades, and I saw that, that wrongdoing, and I was not allowed to say anything. I never was allowed that freedom to deal with problems honestly as I saw fit. I have methods and strategies I have developed over the years, and that is the naturalness of the experienced teacher. You see the problem, and you do what needs to be done. But the system limited your naturalness. It was constraining.

Sting also criticized the rigor and depth of the New York public school curriculum. As a high school teacher of history and geography, he found the required lessons he had to teach

ever so light, ever so superficial. The British system is deeper in content. But the American system has more breadth, and many subjects are touched on quickly. I found the students were not able to handle this fast system, because they didn’t master the basics in elementary school . . . They are really shortchanging the kids. He has an idea, but he does not have the skills to express that idea. You have to be able to express yourself in sentences, and most of these kids cannot. It’s not just the kids, though, this is

a problem in America. I saw it with the journalists, too, and with people I went to graduate school with at Brooklyn College. I got there and I said, “What the Hell!?” because those people could not write or argue. The logic was just not happening. Kids and adults too are not going through the logical steps to reach conclusions.

Sting said that as grave as he found these shortcomings, none of them were reason enough for him to stop trying to teach New York City students, a job he said he loved. Rather, he left because after more than 7 successful years there, after many excellent evaluations and glowing principal recommendations, he was assigned to work with a new principal who “observed the class for 15 minutes” and then gave him his first rating of “unsatisfactory” in a formal evaluation. Without a strong letter of support from a principal, he explained, he could not maintain his legal visa status. Sting said that many of his colleagues encouraged him to formally challenge what seemed to him and to them an unfair critical evaluation, but Sting said,

I didn’t want to be sent home after a lot of humiliation and frustration. I didn’t want to go through all that [the process of a formal challenge]. I decided I had better go home. After all those years of great reviews, that was my first “U” ever, just one or two weeks into the year, after watching my class for 15 minutes. I decided I was too old to take this kind of humiliation. The AP [assistant principal] begged me to stay, and my fellow teachers asked me to stay. I cried like a child, the first time I had cried since I was a teenager, I went to the AP and I just cried. It was too much.

Although Sting chose to retire and return home after receiving the “U,” he decided that he would challenge it in a formal hearing, and he returned to New York a year later to testify in that internal hearing.

I said, “No, you can’t put a U in my file.” I challenged it. In the meeting, my representative from the union asked, “Is that the way you evaluation teachers? A new principal observes a class for 15 minutes, and then gives a U? I shudder to think how you sleep at night.” I was embarrassed for the principal in that hearing. I’m sure he was embarrassed, too. It was not right, what he did.

Sting did not seek reinstatement, but the “U” was removed from his permanent employment record.

Sting taught steadily since finishing teachers college until receiving the U in New York. He said he never thought of leaving the profession, he always loved it. He has been looking for steady teaching employment since returning to Trinidad, but he has not found much yet. He said one principal recently suggested that he should work for free for 1 year, to show what he could do, an offer Sting declined indignantly. The principal of the International School of Port of Spain invited him to come and teach a kind of audition lesson with a similar rationale, but Sting said he found this peculiar, given his substantial qualifications. Now Sting fills his days with finishing off his new house, running errands for his extended family, and gardening. He grows mangoes, cashews, and avocados, and he gave me some of each of these before we parted.

His advice for other Caribbean teachers considering a move to New York?

It is a good idea, but be prepared for culture change and a whole new system of education, and in particular teaching. It is going to be different, and very rough. There will be cultural hurdles you have to jump, and there will be many. That's where teaching becomes a problem. The children are not the problem. The jackasses on top are the problem. From [New York City Mayor Michael] Bloomberg on down. Just give me a program, give me deadlines, and I'll do it. Don't look over my shoulder all the time. But new teachers would have to deal with that. That and the open door policy, all the classroom doors have to remain open at all times. People just walked into my classroom all the time. Electricians would just come in and start working, it was crazy, when I was trying to teach. And I'd warn them that people can be so mean sometimes. There are teachers who watch each other, reporting any little thing to the AP [assistant principal]. And Caribbean people are singled out as not smart! Even though it is the contrary! And the Board of Education is so disorganized. It was surprising for us to see the big America carrying on like this, running from responsibility.

Ruth Baylor,* recruited in 2001 and returned in 2005, interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago, first over the telephone and then at a fried chicken restaurant. Ruth said she worked only 1 year as a public school teacher in New York City, and then stayed on for 3 more years before returning to Trinidad and Tobago. She had been an elementary school teacher for 29 years at the time of her recruitment at the Hilton Hotel in Port of Spain, but she taught high school English and remedial reading in New York. The reason she gave for only teaching 1 year

in New York was that she had received a “U,” in other words an unsatisfactory rating from a principal. “That principal gave me a U on every item except personal appearance,” she said, adding that she was much later told she could have these Us removed if she is willing to go back to New York for a formal hearing, an expense and effort she no longer sees as worthwhile.

“That principal didn’t care for me or the other teachers from Trinidad and Tobago,” Ruth said. She explained that first school year in New York began inauspiciously when several of them arrived at their assigned school, and the principal there said he only wanted to use them as substitute teachers, not as regular teachers. They demanded and quickly got a board hearing to discuss the matter, and that is when they learned that this principal felt like the Caribbean teachers had been “dumped” on him, and he did not want them in his class rooms. The board overruled him, and Ruth was then assigned a regular schedule, but the confrontational tone had been established and she said she was unsurprised later in the year when this particular principal rated her work as largely unsatisfactory.

After Ruth’s teaching contract was not renewed as a result of the U, she stayed on in New York “twiddling her fingers” for 2 or 3 years, and also earning a master’s degree in early education from Brooklyn College, and then she left the United States. She spent some time with her relatives in Canada before returning to her native Trinidad and Tobago. A couple of years after her return, she spent 4 years teaching English again, and then two semesters training teachers at a Catholic institution, but she is “out of work right now.” She said there is lots of competition for teaching jobs in her country these days, and lately she has only been able to secure small jobs or private tuition. Ruth said,

The recruitment threw my career off track. It interrupted my career in New York and in Trinidad. It is an experience I value from a human point of view, because I was able to see how that city functions. I wouldn’t have learned as much if I were not unemployed.

Asked for her first impressions of New York City's public schools, Ruth said,

What can I say? I felt it [the school system] did not necessarily reflect the theoretical framework I had come to expect from my training and experience in education.

Rousseau, Piaget, and so many other thinkers were just being ignored, it seemed to me.

She said that during her teacher training in Trinidad, constant reference was made to the latest American educational research, and she and her peers were taught to value that research and to model their teaching according to the ideals advanced therein. "But I was not seeing it in operation in the most advanced educational system in the world, in New York, the greatest city in the world," she said, adding "The system was dysfunctional in so many ways, I don't even know where to begin. If a teacher saw a mistake in the curriculum, she couldn't change it. No experimentation was allowed. Just toe the line," even if it was a wrong line that was not supported by research and that was not working in the classroom.

Ruth said that she quickly understood that she and her Caribbean peers had been brought in first and foremost to "man the schools," rather than to really teach the children. She said the system did not allow any of the maneuvering that was needed for meaningful instruction to take place. "What we were there for became clear: Keep the system as is, keep the children in check, hold them down for the day, do not transform or instruct. It is a system just to control kids," she said, adding that the school system was different in Trinidad and Tobago.

It was a cultural shock. At home we have a different respect between students and teachers. It is understood that all of us have come to school to work. In New York, I had to grapple with that every day, to establish that over and over again. All I could do was man it. I saw that I was not getting to them. It was always a challenge and a power play, and it started very early in the grades.

Asked if she has any hope for New York City's public school students, Ruth said,

There are positive aspects. But there are so many negative aspects. I don't know. Maybe they need to relax. Before I came to New York, I never saw children monitored through recess. In Trinidad and Tobago, it is not the case. We don't have to monitor children at play. There is no need to watch them eat and dictate their every move. In Trinidad and

Tobago, I now see that the children are very free by comparison. In New York City, the teachers man every minute of the day, and the children never learn to discipline themselves, because they never have to discipline themselves. Trini children have a lot of independence from a young age. In New York, a teacher can't be alone with a child in a classroom. That trust is not there. Our society [in Trinidad and Tobago] is so different.

New York City public schools are like “prisons for children,” according to Ruth. She explained that the intense protection of children against teachers and parents has set up a dysfunctional environment that curtails independent thinking and personal self-discipline. As a result, children never learn to show initiative, or to do what is right for intrinsic rewards rather than out of fear of punishment. “Everything is a crime waiting to happen,” she said.

Asked if she could think of any good qualities she observed in the New York City public schools, Ruth responded,

There are admirable qualities, but in Trinidad and Tobago, the more we imitate the U.S., the more we have your problems. We have prefects in our school, a head boy or a head girl. Students can learn leadership this way. American schools can learn from that.

She then encouraged me to return to Trinidad and Tobago during the regular school year, so that I could observe firsthand how different education is there, compared to New York City. She said that if I did that, I would sometimes see teachers hugging children and vice versa. “In New York City, no human touch is allowed, but some of those children really need to be hugged.”

According to Ruth, the American system of not hugging children and treating them like prisoners in school is “not right or wrong, but evolving. All systems evolve.” She added that many of her former students in Trinidad and Tobago are now her lifelong friends, a situation she says is unlikely to occur in the American system. She said this is because in New York City, the schools are not community, but rather just places to go during the day. They are prisons for children, basically.

Cynthia Jericho,* 54, a current New York City middle school English teacher whom I interviewed at her house in Port of Spain in August, 2013. Cynthia was the second of six children, but she was the oldest in her parents' home, because her older brother was raised by their grandmother. "That was customary in the Caribbean," she said, "to give the first son to the grandmother to raise." Her father always worked at technical jobs, first as an auto mechanic and then with the oil companies, and her mother was a housewife. There were three more boys born after Cynthia, and then a sister 6 years her junior. Since her father was a Pentecostal minister, he made sure all the family members went to church every Sunday, and Cynthia still attends a Pentecostal-like church in New York, a Church of God.

Cynthia said that from as far back as she can remember, she always liked going to school. She started preschool, or what is called "private school" in Trinidad, at about the age of 3½. This was an informal arrangement where older people would care for children in their homes while teaching them the alphabet and the rudiments of writing. "They held our hands and taught us writing that way," she said. "There was a lot of play. I remember Ms. Wolf playing Red Rover, Hop Scotch, London Bridge, This Old Man. It was fun, actually. But I was not playful, I was always reflective."

Reading and spelling were Cynthia's strongest subjects. From a very young age her teachers noticed that she had extraordinary verbal recall. Math by contrast was for her, as she said, "challenging to horrifying. No matter what the teacher did, it just never stuck in my head." She said that sometimes these difficulties caused tension at home. An example she offered was that a family friend, Mr. Brown,* used often to ask her, in front of the rest of her family, "Why can't you be like your sister? She is such a good math student." Cynthia explained that it was not unusual, when she was a child, for friends and relatives to put kids "on the spot" like that. She

said that the whole community took an interest in each child's academic progress, encouraging but also pressuring every child to do well in every subject.

“Fortunately, my mother played a significant role in my early education,” Cynthia said.

She was very involved and she got me the help I needed [in math]. When it was time to prepare for the Common Entrance exam [that all Trinidad and Tobago students must take at the end of elementary school for placement in secondary schools], she found a math tutor and she got help for me.

Because of this extra help in math, combined with her natural flair for words and vocabulary, Cynthia did well on these exams and placed into one of the better secondary schools, where she began her preparations for the GCEs.¹⁵

Cynthia recalled that she earned a U, or unsatisfactory mark, in math her first year of secondary school. She attributed this partially to her lifelong dread of math, and partially to the incompetence of her teacher at that time. “My first high school math teacher was awful,” she said. “He was a doctoral student, testing his ideas on us, and he didn’t know the answers for the problems he gave us to do.” Other than that, Cynthia says her memories of secondary school seem to be “very fuzzy in [her] head now.”

Because she had always been good at languages, near the end of secondary school Cynthia thought that she might like to work as a secretary or a journalist. “Teaching was not in the scheme then,” she said,

That came later. It was a turbulent time in my life. I had to repeat the last year of high school at St. Dominic’s. After that, I worked in a bank, and then for the county revenue. I got married at 21, and it was around that time I met my mentor.

Cynthia’s mentor was and still is Eintou Pearl Springer, who was named the Poet Laureate of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago in 2002. Born in Trinidad in 1944, Springer’s

¹⁵ GCEs are general certificates of examination taken at the ordinary (or “O”) level after two or three years of secondary education, and then taken at the advanced (or “A”) level after two or so more years of secondary education and preparatory to university level study.

work often addresses social justice and African diaspora pride. Springer is still a leader of her country's social and cultural scene. I first saw her in person when she emceed part of the calypso evening celebrations leading up to Emancipation Day 2013, for example, and she was also on the planning committee for those events. Cynthia explained that Springer worked at the National Heritage Library of Trinidad and Tobago, eventually serving as director there for many years before she retired. Cynthia got a job there around the time of her marriage, met Springer, and then "she put me on track," as Cynthia described it:

She put me on track to do my A levels. I studied literature with her, and then I went onto the university [of the West Indies] for my degree in English. I had my first child, my daughter, in 1986. Eintou is her godmother. And I finished my B.A. in 1990.

With her B.A. in hand, Cynthia saw herself at a career crossroads, trying to decide between studying for one more year to become a qualified librarian, like her mentor; or going directly into secondary teaching. "Being a teacher is a serious thing, so I thought it over very seriously," Cynthia said. "I didn't want to be responsible for messing up minds. I spent three months pondering what to do, asking myself, 'Should you do that? Should you become a teacher?'" As Cynthia's daughter was 4 years old in 1990, when she was debating this question with herself, she took into consideration that a teaching career would be more convenient for her child, especially with summers off. She insisted, however, that this was not the reason she finally decided to become a teacher. "I was not playing with these kids," she said, adding, "It was so important to me. Finally, I decided to do it, and I said, 'Send me to the school that needs me the most.'"

Accordingly, Cynthia began her teaching career at the Mucurapo Senior Comprehensive School, a public senior secondary school in a neighborhood in Port of Spain. Cynthia described it as serving students from families of low socioeconomic standing at the time when she taught

there. At Mucurapo, Cynthia's job was to teach English literature to fourth and fifth formers, comparable to grades nine and 10 in the U.S. Cynthia said that she was glad to have been sent to Mucurapo, a school where many students were "severely at risk" of failure. She said that she was always deeply concerned about "what to do to work with these kids, how to really help them." For this reason, she continued her professional development, taking as many relevant courses as she could find to learn more about the best ways to engage her students with vocabulary and writing, always encouraging them to produce as much writing as possible. Along the way, her second child, her son was born in 1991; and she earned her Dip.Ed. in 1992.

After about 10 years of teaching at Mucurapo Senior Comprehensive School, Cynthia said she was interested in trying something different. She applied to teach at the International School of Port of Spain, but she was told that an East Indian applicant was hired instead of her, for the sake of greater faculty diversity. She began a Master's degree in international education that Framingham State University (from Massachusetts, in the U.S.) offered at her school in Mucurapo. "The professors who came out to teach us were stunned we were so bright," Cynthia recalled. Then, one day in the summer of 2001, she noticed a recruiting advertisement in a local newspaper, stating that the New York City public schools were recruiting teachers at the Hilton on Port of Spain. "I told my husband about it, and I had nothing with me that day, no resumes or anything, but he said to go, so we went," she said, "and I was hired! The next day, I faxed stuff to the recruiter, diplomas and certificates, and the rest is history."

Cynthia said that the decision to accept the recruitment offer was not an easy one for her, but talking it over at length with her husband, she saw several compelling reasons to go, and several good reasons to stay. She noted that her husband had been working in New York at the time of the 1990 coup [in Trinidad and Tobago], and he had urged her to leave Trinidad and

Tobago at that time. “In the early 90s, I couldn’t imagine leaving this country. To me, it was like a betrayal of the country to leave. I told him then, Trinidad is the best place in the world for me. It is our home,” she said. In 2001, evaluating the recruitment offer, Cynthia said she still felt this way about Trinidad and Tobago, and she was also doing well professionally there. After 10 years of professional teaching experience, she was teaching the highest levels at her school. She said she was not sure if she should give all this up to try something unknown in New York.

Cynthia said that she and her husband asked their two children, aged 13 and 9 at the time, to participate actively in the decision about whether or not they should move to New York. Her daughter was at St. Francois Girls’ College, and her son was at Rosary Boys Roman Catholic Elementary School. Both were doing well in school, and son was distinguishing himself as a particularly bright student. “That was one reason I thought we should go, foolish mom that I was,” Cynthia said. “They were both on track to go to college, in the United States maybe, and I thought it would be good for them to be there in the system already.”

Cynthia’s face crumpled and her eyes watered when she mentioned her aspirations for her childrens’ American college careers. Those plans had not panned out for either of them yet, although they were 25 and 23 years old at the time of the interview. Neither of her children had finished college yet. Her daughter was working at odd jobs in New York, and her son was pursuing a rap music career in North Carolina. Cynthia said that in the summer of 2001, the higher educational prospects for her children seemed like a compelling reason to make the move north.

Another reason was that, in connection with volunteer work she had been doing for the Emancipation Day Education Support Committee, Cynthia had been learning more and more about “the problems of the black male child, in Trinidad and Tobago, but especially in the

U.S.A. I knew they were having a lot of problems, and I thought, ‘Maybe I can help.’” Just as she had gone into teaching with the intention of going where she was most needed, Cynthia very deliberately chose to go to New York’s hardest to staff, highest needs schools. She wanted to help the black male child.

“That, and my husband also wanted us to do this. After all the T-charts, the pros and cons, after all the family debates, there was more reason to go,” Cynthia said. Although her husband campaigned strongly for her to accept the recruitment offer, and although he has encouraged her in her New York teaching career ever since, he never made plans to go to New York himself. Cynthia explained that he had a good job with the water and sewer company at that time, and he works there still. They live apart while she teaches in New York, so that means they have only spent about 3 months of every year together for the past 12 years, Cynthia explained. She said this has been hard for her.

“I wanted to come back home immediately, and I regret not having followed my gut. We decided, as a family, we would all go or nobody would go,” Cynthia said, although in fact she and the children went, leaving her husband behind in Trinidad and Tobago.

I went first, for the orientation in August. I was appalled at what we were told, at what was happening. The support for the new teachers was so poor. They had no place for us to go, but I had an aunt in Queens. I lived with her at first, so I had that support, unlike many other teachers. Now I look back and I see that was a signal, I wish I had paid more attention to it. It did not make sense, the way they were treating us.

Despite her sense of foreboding, Cynthia brought her two children to New York to join her at the end of August and enrolled them in time to start the new school year at the same time as her.

Then guess what happened? 9/11! To me, this was a foreshadowing. You guys [Americans] made a huge mess of the world, and now this. I thought it was a sign I should go, but I stayed because of my husband. My husband was the only reason I stayed.

He persuaded me to stay. He came to visit us in October or November, and he persuaded me this was a good opportunity for the family.

Asked for her first impressions of New York's public schools, Cynthia said that she was assigned to teach English language arts at a middle school in Brooklyn, and that

it was so horrible! I never felt so incompetent, so disrespected, in all my life. I'm trying to find the words to describe how awful it was, how awful I felt. I felt disoriented, disillusioned, all the dis words. I felt alone . . . I had said I was a high school teacher, not a middle school teacher, but I was put in a middle school. I asked the principal for a syllabus, and she laughed! She said, "Figure it out!"

Cynthia said that even before going to her new school, she had been "scared shitless" by the way it and all the other "hard to staff" schools had been described to her and the other new recruits at their brief orientation.

We were told, if the kids are not in the right place, don't touch them. Don't yell at the kids. [One male teacher recruit] stood up and asked, "Do I need a lawyer to teach here?" So I was already intimidated before I went to my new school. I went into my new classroom, and I said to those children, "Could you please sit down?" as gently as I could, and they just ran roughshod over me. The kids said, "Miss, do your work."

Cynthia explained that her students evidently understood something about the system that she did not, and the necessary cultural adaptation was confusing and painful for her.

"Every Friday, I was packing to go home. Every Friday for 2 years," Cynthia said.

At the end of my second year, I was excessed [that means the principal reported that her services would no longer be required at that school], and I agreed with the principal. I had no control at all. I was out of my depth.

Although Cynthia was offered work at another Brooklyn middle school, she was not at all sure if she should accept another assignment. "My husband asked me, 'What would Eintou do?' and I talked it over with Eintou, too. She said come back, she said don't do this. She begged me not to."

Going against her own gut instincts and against the urgings of her mentor, Cynthia accepted the new teaching assignment. With 2 years of miserable experience behind her, she said she began having different kinds of conversations with herself about her work:

I said to myself, in this system, you can do everything right, and be very nice, but the kids always win. I must adjust. What I had done before did not work, so I had to do something different. I took a different stance. I started to be bitchy. I stopped saying please. I even started cursing. I had to subvert the very nice Ms. Jericho. Still, somehow, the kids saw through it, and they still said, “We love you, Ms. Jericho.” I had to become bitchified to deal with these children, and they understood that.

Once Cynthia achieved this new level of classroom competence, she said the unspoken rules became clear to her:

Do not call for help. Do not send a note to the dean. Do not send a note to the AP [assistant principal], or to the other teachers. Close your door, and get your shit together. Once I understood all of this, I was more in control.

She said she still wanted to come home, but in the meantime she was promoted to lead teacher, and now other teachers come to her to ask for advice about classroom management and curriculum design. She completed her second master’s degree, this one in adult education, because she said she wanted to learn more ways to help other teachers “cope with this mess.” For the past few years, she has been working towards a Ph.D. in learning styles at St. John’s University in Queens.

“In the meantime, while I was doing all of this, my bright, beautiful children, my kids, fell off the track,” Cynthia said, weeping. “This move was supposed to be for them, to give them more opportunities, but we forgot about them,” she said. “They were struggling the same way I was struggling. The move was so hard on them.” After a short stay with her aunt in Queens, Cynthia moved with her children out to Long Island, because she had been advised that that was a better environment for raising children, and that the schools were better there. The transition was nevertheless distressing for both of her children, who were forced to cope with at least five

major stressors: The near total loss of everything and almost everyone they had known before, the separation from their father, the lack of acceptance by the other children, the constant insecurity surrounding their family's visa status and whether they would be permitted to remain in the U.S. legally from one year to the next, and their mother's extreme work related stress.

"They got lost," Sandra said sadly. "My son, at his first public school, came home so upset one day, asking me, 'What's a dime?' I didn't know, and he didn't know." She said, "we figured it out later, but there were so many little things like that, and the other kids were hard," explaining that looming over all of these constant cultural adaptations was the unending question of whether or not the family would be moving back soon. "That was always the first really big problem, that whole cliffhanger, would we be going back or would we be staying, would my green card be issued or not." Cynthia said that her family suffered under that particular stress for 6 years, but then in 2007,

a window opened, they pushed up the age limits for the green card applications, but it was temporary. That was the year my daughter turned 21, so it was just in time. We knew we had to move instantly, so we found the money and we filed, and then the window shut. But we had filed in time, and we all got our green cards.

Cynthia said that when they first entered the U.S. in 2001, they came on a J-visa, meaning that both she and her husband could work legally in the country for 3 years. After that, she was switched to an H-visa, meaning that only she could work, and not her husband. At the same time, in 2004, the education authorities in Trinidad and Tobago told her she would have to "resign or return," meaning they would not hold open the possibility for her to return to teaching there any longer. After 3 years in New York, though, she and her husband felt like it would have "traumatized the kids even more" to have to go back at that point, so they stayed, and she said her son has just been "angry for years" about all of it.

“When we were here [in Trinidad], we took the kids to and from school every day,”

Cynthia recalled.

Everybody knew us and looked out for us. Suddenly, in New York, we knew no one. The kids in New York were mean, they had a different way of speaking. My daughter is very Afrocentric, and very bright. She is very proud of her African heritage, and she was proud that she had given Winnie Mandela a bouquet of flowers when she came to Trinidad and Tobago. Because Eintou is her godmother, she had met all of these luminaries, my kids knew everybody in Trinidad and Tobago. But when she tried to talk about that in New York City, no one believed her or even understood what she was talking about. She said, “Mom, these kids don’t know anything,” and that was so hard for her.

While her children were dealing with all of this, Cynthia said she came home every night so exhausted she actually asked them not to speak to her for the first half hour. Without meaning to, this meant that her “kids were left on their own to absorb all the negatives.” She said that their father was not there, and in some ways she was not there to help them sort through the unrelenting pressures brought on by the family’s immigration. “It was hard for my son especially,” Cynthia said. “At one point, he stopped going to school, because of gang pressure.” She said that while she would have heard about this right away in Trinidad and Tobago, it took longer for her to figure it out in New York. Cynthia said that for many years, she was very involved with the Association of International Educators, even after she got her own green card, trying to help other teachers get theirs; but about 3 years ago, she “saw what had happened to my kids, my kids were dying,” so she scaled back her volunteer work and began trying to spend more time with them.

“But the damage had been done,” Cynthia said of the effects of her family’s immigration on her children. She said her daughter, 25, is now living with her on Long Island, working, with nine credits left for her associate’s degree. Her son is living in another state, not studying, and pursuing a career in rap music. She said her kids don’t want to visit Trinidad and Tobago, and

she only sees her husband in July and August, at Christmas, and for a short visit in the spring, for a total of about three months a year. She said this “has taken its toll in a number of ways, but we still manage to have a semblance of a relationship.”

Asked what advice she has for other Caribbean teachers considering following in her footsteps, Cynthia said,

It is such a personal decision. We were advised not to come. Teachers in New York advised me not to come, but I thought, “You did it, why not me?” If I were to advise someone, I’d give them the facts. I’d ask people to think about their children. You can’t ask a 9-year-old or a 14-year-old to make that decision. They don’t know. They just have some television fantasy of what America is. You must know your children and their needs. My children were hurt by it. People say children are resilient, but that is unfair. If you are single, or a retiree, that’s different. Or maybe you could go alone and then bring your kids, after you are sure. The U.S. is not the same as it was 50 years ago. America itself is struggling. People of the Panama Canal era who went to America must have had a very different experience.

Cynthia said,

maybe it is different for third worlders, people whose countries are struggling. That is not Trinidad and Tobago. I had a nice life here. I had a house. I had a community. I had an education. In New York, I have had to live below what I was used to. Now I am starting again. That is what I would tell other Caribbean teachers.

Gloria Prescott, 62, interviewed by telephone to Tobago, where she now works as a Christian minister. Growing up in Tobago with nine brothers and three sisters, Gloria said her family always went to church, usually a Methodist church. She joined the Ebenezer Methodist church as soon as she moved to New York, and she is a Methodist minister now that she has returned to her home island.

When Gloria saw the advertisement that New York City schools were recruiting teachers, she was at a transitional point in her life where her children were grown and she “wanted to grow, wanted to find new avenues, to study, and to try something new.” She had already made plans to go teach in the Bahamas, but since her sisters were already living in the U.S., she

decided to go to the Hilton and learn more about the opportunity. She was interviewed and recruited that day, and after filling out a few forms and buying a plane ticket, she was on her way to New York just a few weeks later.

Married with three grown children, Gloria said she does not feel her family was very much affected by her decision to teach in New York. Her two older children were well into their twenties and independent by that time, and only her younger daughter, age 12 at the time, accompanied her to New York. Her husband did not want to go to New York, even refusing to apply for a green card when the opportunity arose. Twelve years later when I interviewed Gloria, she said that she and her three children all have U.S. citizenships, with two of them residing in New York and one residing in Germany. She said they all just filed for U.S. citizenship when they were ready, and it was not so difficult for them to obtain it.

Gloria's 12-year-old daughter only stayed in New York for the first year. At that time, Gloria was concerned that the school curriculum was not sufficiently rigorous to help her make good progress. "I said, 'You need some competition. Maybe we should send you back to Tobago.' So I let her come back home to her father to finish her secondary school." Since then, that daughter has earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Baruch College in Manhattan, and is now working on a master's degree in human resources.

Assigned to an elementary school in the Bronx, Gloria said, "It was a real culture shock. I was not prepared for the vitriol of the students." Since she already had a master's degree in special education, she was at first assigned to co-teach with a general education teacher and a paraprofessional. However, the principal soon realized she was qualified to handle a regular classroom by herself, so she was quickly re-assigned to teach first grade five, and then later grade four. Within a year, she passed the exam for her New York state teacher certification, and

she began further professional studies. She also began to establish her permanent residency in the U.S., not connected with her employment but through her many relatives who were already American citizens. She decided to go home in 2003, though, because her father got sick and she wanted to be there for him. “I had no problems teaching in New York,” Gloria said. “Some Caribbean teachers were sent home, but not me.”

Gloria said she originally went home with the intention of returning after a year or two, and her principal had agreed to that. However, by the time she was ready to return in 2004, there was a new principal at the school with different ideas. “The new principal was Hispanic, and she didn’t want any more black teachers,” Gloria said. “She said there were already too many black people at the school.”

Gloria had earned her bachelor’s degree in inclusive special education in her native Tobago, and she found the approach to special education in New York different from what she was used to before. “Teachers must evaluate if a student is having difficulty, and then deal with that,” she said. “Only the most severe cases need to go to special schools. Most students can be included in regular classrooms.” Gloria said she quickly found herself in disagreement with the way the New York public school system evaluated students, however, and with the way they were taught.

“The reading and math skills [in New York public elementary schools] are not so good, and I could see why,” Gloria said.

I was going crazy in that system. You can’t teach one day. The system is upsetting the children. They start fractions one day, and the next day, it’s something different. It’s easy to see why children are failing math and sciences in America. In Trinidad and Tobago, when we teach a new subject, we plan it, we practice it, we do it in different ways over time. We teach it not just to pass an exam, but to build life skills. The way they do it in New York cannot work, and the teachers there cannot teach.

Gloria said that she is very sorry to hear that more and more public schools are being closed in New York and elsewhere in the U.S. “Closing schools is crazy,” Gloria said.

These children are under duress. They watch television all the time, because their parents are not home. If we go shallow with them in the schools and with what we teach them, they will remain shallow. Some children only read at school. Some children must be mothers and fathers at home. It is so different in Tobago. We really care for our children here. Here, you can be the best you can be, but you have to sacrifice for it.

Asked what advice she has for other Caribbean teachers who might be considering a move to New York, Gloria said,

I tell people, “You have to be a transformational leader.” Some are afraid of the children’s behavior, but if you show timidity, they will overpower you. You must listen, but you must show command. And you have to understand people. I learned so much going to New York. It was a rich travel experience for me. You can do it, but draw the line. Know your own boundaries. Know the laws and regulations.

Gloria said she still enjoys visiting the U.S. regularly to visit her many family members who live there. In addition to her two children in New York, she has five sisters in Queens, one sister in Brooklyn, one sister in New Jersey, one brother and a mother in New York. She has also been going to the U.S. periodically to work on her master’s degree in divinity at the Ohio Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. “I’m working for the Lord now, not getting paid,” Gloria said. “I can go back to New York or back to teaching, but so many children need me. I’m doing good work now.”

Chapter Five

Discussion: An Ethnographic Exploration of Actual Neoliberalism

Introduction

I argue that international teacher recruitment, and in particular the U.S. public school recruitment of highly trained teachers from “developing” countries, has become an illusory panacea for alleged teacher shortages, a short-term strategy for staffing classrooms instead of a longer-term and much more difficult and costly set of strategies for really prioritizing education as a necessary core value of a just and sustainable knowledge economy. Using ethnography to inform policy, my intensive interviews with ten of New York City’s Caribbean teachers and five of their adult children shed light on actual neoliberalism, illuminating both the bright American Dream that lured Caribbean teachers to New York’s public schools and the sometimes dark American realities that they and their children found there. The interstices between workers’ rights, citizenship rights, and human rights became more visible as this group of immigrant knowledge workers and their families spoke of their negotiations with the challenges of immigrating to a new city and a new country with minimal employer support. The special insider/outsider perspectives of these informants offer insights that may fruitfully inform both American educators concerned with improving American public education policy and Caribbean educators considering migrating to America themselves. The gender dynamics revealed through these interviews highlight important family and personal identity considerations that inevitably factor into the immigrant experience, and that should therefore be factored into immigration policy.

Summary of the First Three Chapters

This dissertation attended to an as-yet unstudied population of New York City public school teachers recruited from Anglophone Caribbean countries. This recruitment campaign, lasting from 2001 to 2003, was considered within the context of many similar international recruitment efforts for the staffing of American public schools, especially “hard to staff” urban schools. Possible reasons for certain “teacher shortages” were considered, including insufficient pay and other deficiencies in professional support for public school teachers. Various government responses, especially involving international recruitment, were noted. The New York City public school recruitment of Caribbean teachers was described, as well as some general historical context for the popular migration of Caribbeans to New York City. The theory of flexible labor in late capitalism (Harvey, 2011; Ong, 2007) was discussed, as well as Rowbotham’s theory of gendered transgenerational class projects (1999), Foucault’s description of the immigrant as an entrepreneur of himself (2008), and selected broad theoretical critiques of neoliberal globalized educational policy (Peters, 2011; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

In this the fifth and final chapter of this dissertation, I bring these theories to bear upon the findings reported in chapter four, to wit the results of the intensive interviewing comprising my original data set. Building upon earlier theories of flexible labor, gendered transgenerational class projects, and critiques of globalized educational policy, I argue that my interviews with New York City’s Caribbean teachers reveal the extraordinary flexibility of their teacher labor, as well as gendered aspects of their transgenerational class projects in pursuit of their rights as workers, citizens and humans. I further argue that the special insider/outsider perspectives of these teachers and their adult children offer valuable insights into key problems with American

public education as well as useful information for future international teachers and their recruiters and administrators.

As described in Chapter Three, immersion interviewing (Dash, 1996) and life history research (Bertaux & Thompson, 1997) were combined to develop the immersion interviewing method employed in this study. I chose the Dash method over others because I find it more effective in eliciting the complex human stories that comprise and illuminate larger social phenomenon. For example, spending extended periods of time with the teachers in my study helped me to gather more detailed and personal accounts of their experiences of the globalization of their teacher labor. Following Dash's precepts, I audio recorded and transcribed my interviews, and I spent as much time as I could with my participants, sometimes staying overnight in their homes, taking meals together, and visiting their churches and other favorite locations with them. The list of interview questions was developed first with reference to the immersion interviewing protocols developed by Dash, beginning with questions about the subjects' earliest school and family memories and including questions about their religious upbringing. The list of interview questions was further developed with reference to Bertaux and Thompson's life history research methods, in particular questions about the subjects' family memories and experiences before and after their 2001 recruitment experience.

After my dissertation committee approved my dissertation proposal in December, 2012, and my university's Internal Review Board approved my research protocols in March, 2013, I began conducting interviews with a Trinidadian teacher whom I had met briefly at The Black Institute in Manhattan the previous summer. While visiting with this teacher and her family in Brownsville, Brooklyn, they began introducing me to other Caribbean teachers and their families. These introductions included two Guyanese teachers and one from St. Vincent and the

Grenadines, all of whom I interviewed for this project. By contacting the African American Caribbean Educators Association headquartered in Queens, New York, I met several other Caribbean teachers, including one Jamaican family I stayed with and interviewed in Canarsie, Brooklyn, and one other Jamaican teacher whom I interviewed at her school in Flatbush, Brooklyn. During five research trips to Brooklyn, New York in March through June, 2013, in addition to numerous phone calls and Skype chats, I completed interviews with 10 subjects, including five teachers and five of their adult children. I also completed at least three other interviews (one Guyanese and two Jamaicans) which are not included in this dissertation, but which I may include in a larger future project. After completing the 10 Brooklyn interviews included in this project, I accepted an invitation from my first Trinidadian subject, whom I call Angela, to visit with her in her home in Trinidad and Tobago in July and August, 2013. I spent two weeks there, during which time I met with and interviewed five more teachers recruited to teach in New York City's public schools in 2001. This completed my data set of 15 audio recorded and transcribed interviews with 10 teachers and five of their adult children, which are the results of my research and the contents of Chapter Four of this dissertation. In this, Chapter Five, I interpret these results from a poststructuralist anthropological perspective (Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2011; Ong, 1999), as discussed in Chapter Two.

Discussion of Findings

Three salient findings emerge from my original research into the case of New York City's Caribbean teachers, interpreted from a poststructuralist anthropological perspective (Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2011; Ong, 1999): First, I argue that these testimonies, especially their discussions of the American Dream and their unexpected experiences of American poverty,

demonstrate the need for better support for immigrant knowledge workers, and greater awareness of their rights as workers, citizens and humans. Second, I argue that their insider/outsider perspectives convey a special and well-deserved authority offering invaluable insights into key shortcomings of American public education, ethnographically derived insights capable of informing educational policy seeking to redress these shortcomings. Third, I argue that these testimonies suggest distinctly gendered patterns in the recruitment of international teachers and their families, emphasizing the family identities of immigrant laborers, human connections and obligations which should be acknowledged by teacher recruitment and immigration policies.

Finding #1: These testimonies illuminate the nexus between workers’ rights, citizenship rights, and human rights. The testimonies of these Caribbean teachers and their adult children illuminate the nexus between workers’ rights, citizenship rights, and human rights. As the teachers and their families spoke of the challenges their recruitment and immigration posed, and how they negotiated those challenges, it became increasingly clear that these distinct kinds of rights were interdependent, that human rights could not be accessed without citizenship rights, and that citizenship rights could not be accessed without workers’ rights. Their testimonies put human faces on actual neoliberalism as it is being experienced by international teachers and their families mobilized in support of an American public school system struggling to attract and retain teachers. Embodying the flexible capital of the worker in late capitalism (Harvey, 1999; Ong, 2006), all of the teachers spoke of the unexpected and extreme degree of professional vulnerability they felt, often expressing this as “the fear of a U,” or in other words the fear that the disapproval of one principal (denoted with a “U,” or unsatisfactory evaluation) could derail their teaching careers and their families’ livelihoods. Some spoke of the unexpected state of precarity in which they and their children found themselves. Many participants also

framed it in terms of their understanding of and relationship to the American Dream. Trinidadian special educator Angela Nestle,* for example, lamented that despite her decades of successful teaching and even after many years of satisfactory service in New York, she never dared to stand up to her principal, even when she knew her principal was making a mistake or making unreasonable demands. Although she received her green card before we completed our interviews, she said that for the 12 years prior to that she felt she had to remain ever vigilant against the possibility that her principal might rate her as unsatisfactory: Angela said,

Here I was recruited to work in the United States, the beacon of human rights, and look at how I was treated? . . . The principal knew I didn't have my green card, so she put double the work on me. I have kindergarteners and first graders in my class, so I have to do two separate lesson plans and two separate programs. Anybody would refuse, but I can't because I don't have my green card . . . The principal calls me in and she asks me, "Do you trust me?" The hair stands up on the back of my neck and I say, "Yes." What else can I say? And she says, "These children should be cutting and pasting." I say, "Remember, these children are very slow. At the end of the day of cutting and pasting, there won't be enough time to do the assessment and curriculum and other activities that you need me to do. I don't have time to document all the information to put in your precious binder, just so you can say your students cut and paste." But she said the cutting and pasting is more important, so I said, "Very good," and I did cut and paste with my students all that day. And in the end I am doing double the work, because that same principal will come and ask me, "Where is the weekly assessment you're supposed to do? Where are all these other things you're supposed to do?" I will say, "I couldn't do those things, because I was too busy doing what you asked me to do." But it really means that I go to bed at midnight every night and wake up at 4 a.m. every morning, just to make sure I get it all done. Every year the principal assigns the weakest children for me to work with, because she knows I can teach them and they will learn with me. I pride myself on turning around the most difficult children. I have been going to work 32 years as a special education teacher. And still I am waiting to hear every year if I will get a U.

According to Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

Nevertheless, Angela often stated that she felt her employment conditions with the New York City public schools were often tantamount to what she called "indentured servitude."

This seemingly mundane possibility that might be expected to occur from time to time over the course of many years of professional teaching, to with one unsatisfactory evaluation by one superior, took on an exaggerated significance for her because of her lack of citizenship status. A citizen of the country could apply for a different job if one employer's demands were excessive or unreasonable, or if one employer expressed dissatisfaction with that worker. A citizen could also rely on unemployment insurance for at least a few months if her employment were unexpectedly terminated. Angela's non-citizen status, however, conferred upon her extraordinary vulnerability to the assessment of any one supervisor, because one unsatisfactory rating could lead to the revocation of her visa, making further employment legally impossible and also terminating her right to be in the country where she had been settled with her family for many years. Her human right to stay in her own home with her family was threatened by her lack of citizenship rights in the form of a visa her employer could easily have revoked, and this in turn hampered her rights as a worker who was not free to raise concerns or seek employment elsewhere. Angela's son Augustus invoked the meme of the American Dream in his analysis of his own immigration experience, and his consideration of his own rights in relation to that. He noted that, although his family came to New York because his mother's professional skills met a crucial social need there, they had to spend several years sharing a one-bedroom apartment in a low income, high crime neighborhood, because her salary was not sufficient to afford a better living situation for the family. He contrasted this impoverished reality with the bright dreams the family had had when they accepted the recruitment offer, and he contrasted it also with the much more comfortable three bedroom house they had shared in their native Trinidad.

Augustus, who is now a U.S. citizen, said he chooses to remain in America because he still wants to help his family, and to be here for his daughter. “I want to go home, I want to really, really bad,” he said.

Maybe one day I will. It would still be ideal to me, to live in Trinidad again. I don’t want to live the American Dream, because that is all it is, it’s a dream. You go to school, go to college, work hard, save your money, fall in love, get married, get kids. The American Dream, the picket fence, it’s a dream. That’s why they call it the American Dream. Listen to the words, how rich people and how people who are making money and making their life because of us, our dreams are their lifestyle. You understand. What we have here is a dream. So you work all day, and you go to bed, and you sleep and you dream. That’s the American Dream. You dream it. You are not going to live it.

Angela’s two younger children remain in the United States out of legal status, having aged out of their eligibility to be sponsored on the green card which Angela did eventually get. This means neither of them has the legal right to work in America, depriving them of both workers’ rights and the usual legal path to permanent residency and citizenship, and leaving their human rights in many ways undefended. Angela’s daughter, Angel, spoke about the ways her various rights have been circumscribed by her mother’s recruitment and her family’s immigration when she was 16 years old. She said that she feels conflicted about her decision to remain in the United States out of legal visa status with her young son, who is of course a U.S. citizen by birth. On one hand, she sometimes misses the country of her birth where she is still a citizen, and she would like to go there to spend time with her father and many of her friends. On the other hand, she is unwilling to impose such a stressful move on her son, and she is determined to raise him as a U.S. citizen, helping him to get the best education possible. Her decision to remain in the United States now precludes her access to many of her own rights, despite the fact that she came to this country legally with her professionally recruited mother. Angela’s younger son, Arthur, remains in similarly vulnerable circumstances, working as a

volunteer agitating for immigrant rights, but for now himself an illegal alien unable to access his own immigrant rights.

Jamaican elementary school teacher Sallie Baker* found herself deprived of her rights after 11 years of satisfactory teaching service for the same New York public school. Sallie surmised that the unsatisfactory principal rating that ultimately stripped her of her legal work status in the U.S. may have been a combination of budgeting concerns and a lack of rapport between her and the principal. She explained that as an older, more experienced teacher, her pay was higher, so a principal might be motivated to let her go and bring in a less experienced and therefore cheaper teacher. Like Angela, Sallie also spoke of the impossibility for an immigrant teacher of posing any kind of challenge to a principal or of asserting any professional authority. Whatever the principal's motivation, the consequence is that Sallie now finds herself out of legal status and unable to seek paid teaching employment, even though she was recruited and for many years retained as a satisfactory professional teacher. She now has no way to claim workers' rights, citizenship rights, or human rights, although she remains in New York, volunteering as a teacher in a private school affiliated with her church.

Guyanese music educator Martha Menard* also spoke of threats to her rights posed by the first two principals she was assigned to work with upon her arrival in New York. She said that during her first year in the system, her musical and cultural qualifications were evidently ignored as she was assigned to work as a substitute teacher for general subjects and then as a special educator, neither of which she was qualified or certificated to do. When she tried to seek relief from these inappropriate assignments, she said that at least one of the principals labeled her as insubordinate and tried to force her out of the system. In other words, as an immigrant teacher she was not accorded the professional rights she had come to expect. Without a principal's

approval, she did not have workers' rights, and therefore she did not have access to citizenship or human rights. By the end of her first year, however, she was assigned to teach music under the supervision of a principal who was amenable to her and her work, and so she was able to stay and build her life and her rights in this country.

Bernard Longford,* the Rastafarian math teacher from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, did not report infringements upon his rights concomitant with his recruitment, but he did argue that education was a path out of poverty within two generations, a lesson he learned early in life from his father, who was a school principal. "With education, you could see the upward mobility of a family within two generations," he said, adding, "People could see that it was a way out, so families pushed education [in his native country], and they insisted teachers be treated with respect." Thus framing education as a way out of poverty, Bernard was also positing it as a leverage upon rights of all kinds, including worker's rights, citizenship rights, and human rights. This dovetails with Ong's description of "a new ethical regime assembled around claims to intellectual excellence, scholarships, employment, and valuable citizens" (2006, p. 187). Following Bernard's logic, and Ong's description, poor families who sent their children to school, thus cultivating their intellectual excellence, could expect, even demand as their right, the full privileges of citizenship accorded to educated, employed, and thus valuable citizens.

Malachi Copperfield,* the young, unemployed architect who immigrated with his teacher mother from Trinidad to New York so that he could become an architect, spoke of a rupture between his idyllic childhood in Trinidad and his precarious existence in New York, and of the mismatch between his expectations to live the American Dream and his actual experience of the immigrant's neoliberal reality. Coming from a very supportive situation where all his needs were met, Malachi was raised to think that if he applied himself to his studies, he would eventually be

rewarded with a satisfying and remunerative career. At the time of his mother's recruitment, he and his mother felt they had reason to believe he could expect to proceed with that plan in New York, where she had been recruited to teach and where her skills were evidently in high demand. In the absence of a clear path to his citizenship rights, however, Malachi found himself increasingly alienated from the rest of his rights as well. Over the years, various of his rights were curtailed. First, he found his rights to study in the United States were limited, and his studies were delayed as he travelled back and forth to his home country applying for the appropriate visas. At times he found himself out of status and thus unable to build his architecture portfolio with international travel or to accept prestigious paid internships as his peers were doing. When he eventually finished his education but did not find a job, his student visa expired and he remained out of status. He found himself more or less trapped in New York, no longer able to visit his father in his home country, or his many relatives in Canada, but really no longer able to return to Trinidad, either, having made himself at home in New York for so many years since he was a teenager. Although he and his mother felt they had upheld their end of an unspoken bargain—They had worked hard and studied well, they had filled out all the proper forms, etc.—Malachi's path to full citizenship, including his workers' rights and his human rights, was terminated. Now, like his friend Arthur noted above, he spends his time organizing and agitating for immigrant rights for himself and others like him.

The Jamaican mother and daughter I spoke with, kindergarten teacher Fannie Dickens* and her daughter Maylie Dickens,* fared better in their quest for full rights in their new country. Fannie's is in many ways a victorious story of her rise from attending an outdoor kindergarten in a very poor village in the Jamaican countryside to her current career as a tenured kindergarten teacher in a New York public school. Using educational opportunities to access a wider world at

many points in her life, Fannie defied her own mother's stated preferences at least twice, first when she chose to pursue her teaching career in the metropolitan capitol, Kingston, and again when she chose to accept the recruitment offer and move her family to New York City. Her bids for greater rights for herself and her family paid off, and she emphasized the way that her choice to immigrate enabled her to send all three of her children to college, something she said she did not believe she could have afforded had she remained in Kingston. Working alongside her husband, coincidentally also a Rastafarian math teacher not to be confused with Bernard from St. Vincent, who was another participant, she and her husband and two of their children now hold green cards, while the third is a U.S. citizen. Furthermore, they own a large and comfortable three bedroom brownstone home with a basement apartment in a tree-lined, picturesque part of Brooklyn. Respected and valued by their employers, Fannie and her husband enjoy workers' rights, limited citizenship rights as green card holders, and extensive human rights materially supported by their successful and stable employment as tenured public school teachers. Their children, too, enjoy access to all of these rights, and they continue their bids for ever greater access to their rights by continuing their educations, as their parents have always urged them to do. Their two daughters were celebrating graduations while I was visiting with them in May, 2013, one from law school and the other from college, and their son was studying for a career in catering.

Maylie Dickens,* Fannie Dickens' daughter, attributes these positive outcomes mainly to the fact that her mother is "a modern day hustler." Maylie, who gained her own naturalized United States citizenship through marriage, said that the green card applications process took about 10 years for the rest of her family, but that it seemed to go smoothly. She said the Board of Education, her parents' employment visa sponsors, apparently provided

pretty broad instructions . . . [leaving the matter mostly] up to the motivation or the intellect of that teacher to kind of carry it out on their own . . . I do think that a lot of the initiative came from my mother, because she's such a go getter.

Despite her family's success in obtaining their green cards and other kinds of rights in America, Maylie expressed doubts about whether the American lifestyle was an overall improvement over the Jamaican lifestyle. "In Jamaica, you work and you come home and chill," she said. "You go to the beach, life is just better, and you can enjoy the sunshine. Here, it's just work, work, work. Pay your bills. Work, work, work, pay your bills. It's very hectic." Maylie anticipated that she would be "working 12 to 15 hour days" for the next few years in order to pay off her law school debts, working just as hard in law as she had in investment banking, a lifestyle she said she did not like and had hoped to find a way out of, in other words "living to work." As hard as she has worked to maximize her own possibilities and rights, she has achieved her right to work and even her rights as a U.S. citizen, but possibly at the expense of some of her other human rights, including her right to rest and leisure. The human right to rest and leisure is a right stipulated by Article 24 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, "Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay."

The five teachers I interviewed during my research trip to Trinidad and Tobago, all recruited in the summer of 2001 the same as the 10 teachers I had spoken with in Brooklyn, New York, all expressed concerns about their rights as knowledge workers for the New York City public schools. Kamaria Presley,* is a 65-year-old math teacher who returned home after 7 years in New York because of difficulties with a principal. Accepting the recruitment offer at a later point in her life, a point when her three children were already independent adults with careers of their own well underway and she herself had already amassed adequate retirement savings,

Kamaria found herself in many ways less vulnerable than many other recruited teachers. She was not highly motivated to pursue a green card or United States citizenship for herself or her kin, so citizenship rights were not among her concerns. Financially well established and with extensive kinship and friendship networks already established in New York City, Kamaria was also well able to access her full complement of human rights throughout her 7-year stay in the city. An important exception to this, though, was her deteriorating health, an evidently stress-induced condition brought on by her onerous work environment. In other words, her lack of workers' rights led to damage to her human right to a healthy work environment. She described an unhealthy working environment where she was never allowed to question authority, even when to her administrative mistakes were obvious and could have been easily remedied with open dialogue. She said this ongoing invalidation and silencing of her professional input drove her blood pressure dangerously high, and eventually led to a principal dismissing her by labeling her "insubordinate," a label she found illogical and inappropriate to her professional status. Rather, she described herself as inquisitive and interested in problem solving. As an immigrant teacher, Kamaria found that she was not able to access her workers' rights to full professional consideration, or her human right to a healthy work environment.

Like Kamaria, Sting McDonald* was also denied his right to a healthy work environment after his recruitment to teach in New York City's public schools. He reported that he was forced to work in a very small, overcrowded, moldy, windowless classroom with no ventilation, a situation which went on for over a month despite his pleas to the administration for relief, and that led to a string of increasingly serious health problems. He suffered first from a throat ailment, then he lost his voice altogether, then he fell into a depression for the first time in his life. He was forced to clean up the offending moldy classroom closet himself, and he eventually

had to take five months of unpaid leave to recover his health. Returning to his old job, Sting was surprised when the recently hired principal dropped by his classroom for one brief observation and then gave him one of the dreaded “Us,” or in other words an unsatisfactory evaluation. Although Sting did have and did at first pursue some redress through his teachers’ union, this event ultimately marked the end of his New York City teaching career, precipitating his decision to return to his home country after 8½ years in the United States, just 1½ years before he would have been entitled to a U.S. Social Security check. In the end, Sting’s inadequate access to his workers’ rights led to a violation of his human rights, including his right to just and favorable working conditions, his right not to be subjected to degrading treatment, and his right to work. Although he returned to home to Trinidad and Tobago in 2010, and although he had enjoyed decades of successful teaching, Sting had still not found work at the time I interviewed him in August, 2013.

Ruth Baylor* is a 60-something high school English teacher who taught in a New York City public school for only 1 year before a principal rated her as unsatisfactory, thus ending her teaching career in that city, and hampering her professional aspirations in the years since. Despite 29 years of experience at the time of her recruitment, the principal who supervised her first year teaching in New York evaluated her as unsatisfactory in every area except her personal appearance, Ruth said. She later learned that she could have those “Us” removed from her record through a formal hearing with representation by her teachers’ union, but she decided this would not be worth the expense and effort. “That principal didn’t care for me or the other teachers from Trinidad and Tobago,” Ruth explained, noting that the principal reported in a board hearing that he felt the Caribbean teachers had been “dumped on him” without his consent. Because the particular principal Ruth happened to be assigned to said he did not want to work with Caribbean

educators and acted accordingly, Ruth found herself in a precarious immigrant situation without the access to her workers' rights that she had expected as a recruited professional. At the time when I interviewed her in August, 2013, she said that she had since worked full time for 4 years since leaving New York in 2004, but she was "out of work right now." She said there is lots of competition for teaching jobs in her country these days, and lately she has only been able to secure small jobs or private tuition. "The recruitment threw my career off track. It interrupted my career in New York and in Trinidad," Ruth said.

Cynthia Jericho* is a current New York City middle school English teacher who brought her two children, then aged 13 and 9, with her in 2001 and then lived apart from her husband for more than 12 years and counting. Despite 10 years of professional teaching experience before her recruitment, Cynthia said she felt badly out of her depth during her first year teaching in a New York public school: "I never felt so incompetent, so disrespected, in all my life. I'm trying to find the words to describe how awful it was, how awful I felt. I felt disoriented, disillusioned, all the dis words. I felt alone . . ." She said that she eventually learned to survive and then thrive in the system by becoming "bitchified," and by learning to rely on herself without support from anyone else in her school. Cynthia's greatest disappointment with her recruitment experience stemmed from her concerns about her children's educational and personal progress. She said that her job was so stressful and all-consuming that she failed to notice until it was too late what a difficult immigrant transitional experience both of her children were having in New York without their father, a situation that she said has resulted in less-than-stellar academic progress for both of them, although they had been top students in their native country. I argue that the stress Cynthia's job placed on her and her family, leaving her marriage on hold for 9 months of every year and her children largely unattended throughout their adolescent years while she

herself morphed into an aggressive character she would not have recognized previously, constitutes a violation of her human rights. Specifically, she was deprived of “just and favourable conditions of work” (UDHR, 1948, Article 23), resulting in harm to her children and her marriage. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23, “The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state.” Far from protecting or supporting Cynthia’s family, her recruitment and subsequent working conditions placed undue stress on her and her family, depriving them of protection for this basic human right.

Gloria Prescott* is the 62-year-old elementary teacher from Tobago who stayed in New York for 2 years and then returned home to care for an ailing parent and become a Christian minister. Like Kamaria, Gloria also accepted the recruitment offer at a time she felt was convenient for her and her family. Her two older children were already independent of her, her husband was content to stay home in Tobago, and her 12-year-old daughter was happy to accompany her, although she subsequently returned to Tobago after one year in New York. Gloria is the only teacher I interviewed who did not report any sort of infringement of her rights concomitant with her recruitment experience. She said that she had no difficulties teaching in New York, and that she and all of her family members now hold United States citizenships, through an application process she described as straightforward and easy. She also noted that her family’s citizenship applications were facilitated by the fact that they had several relatives residing in New York who had already obtained their United States citizenships.

Despite Gloria’s generally positive report of her treatment as a recruited teacher, her stated reason for not returning to work in New York after she was again free to do so suggests the violation of at least two of her human rights. These are her right to work (UDHR Article 23)

and her right to protection from discrimination (Article 7). Gloria said she originally went home with the intention of returning after a year or two, and her principal had agreed to that. However, by the time she was ready to return in 2004, there was a new principal at the school with different ideas. “The new principal was Hispanic, and she didn’t want any more black teachers,” Gloria said. “She said there were already too many black people at the school.” Although Gloria sought no redress and accepted this principal’s decision, this was a violation of her human rights, a violation more difficult for an immigrant teacher to redress.

Considered as a whole, my interviews with these 10 teachers recruited from the Caribbean to teach in New York City in 2001, as well my five interviews with five of the adult children of these teachers, reveal their actual experience of this neoliberalized global response to a local teacher shortage. Often rendered vulnerable by the immigrant status conferred by the recruitment process, these teachers and their children sometimes characterized their situation as an unlooked for “indentured servitude,” a clear contravention of Article 4 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the article prohibiting slavery or servitude. More often, the teachers described degrading working conditions, in contravention of Article 5. Many noted that their pay upon arrival was not adequate to support their families in a dignity comparable to the middle class circumstances they had left behind, in contravention of Article 23. Finally, the articles in support of families and motherhood appeared to be violated for many of these participants. UDHR Article 16 declares that the “family . . . is entitled to protection by society and the state,” but many participants spoke of untoward pressures placed upon their families by the exigencies of the international recruitment experience. UDHR Article 25 notes that “motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance,” but two of the eight

female teachers I spoke with noted that teaching in New York's public schools placed extreme pressure on their ability to care for their children.

Finding #2: The Insider/Outsider perspectives of New York's Caribbean educators prove that international recruitment is an illusory panacea for systemic problems, but can enrich American educational policy. All 10 of the Caribbean teachers and all five of their children who participated in this study expressed strong opinions about American education in general and the New York City public schools in particular. I argue that their observations prove that their recruitment was an illusory panacea for problems demanding systemic redress, and that they are especially valuable for education policy given their insider/outsider perspectives. They are in some ways outsiders, because they were raised and educated outside of the United States, and they retain their Caribbean culture, distinct from the culture of native New Yorkers. Yet they are also insiders in many important ways: They were recruited to "hard to staff" schools where their skills were sorely needed. They are members of the African diaspora, making them in some ways presumably better able to identify with the mostly African diaspora students they came to serve. And finally, they did actually teach in the New York City schools for 1 to 12 years, making them insiders in that system, with all the authority that ought to accrue to that difficult and important service.

Angela Nestle,* the special educator from Trinidad and Tobago, observed that in the school where she teaches, teachers' time and school resources are both regularly wasted as a matter of course and even policy. Referencing the same example noted in the discussion of human rights in Finding #1, Angela explained that she and other teachers are regularly required to do excessive amounts of paperwork to document their teaching, leaving them less and less time for actual teaching, including lesson planning. She reported that throughout the school year

she often gets only 4 hours of sleep each night as she strives to meet the mounting paperwork demands made by her principal. A related problem she discussed was the arbitrary switching of curricular plans by administrators, a practice that hampers teachers' ability to fully teach lessons they have already planned and begun. In addition to this rampant wasting of teachers' time, and concomitantly the random wasting of students' time when they often do not have a reasonable chance to master concepts that are only partially taught, Angela also reported that books and other material resources are regularly over-ordered and underused in her school and in other schools with which she is familiar. While I was visiting with her in her home, she showed me an example of this. She placed two nearly identical textbooks side by side, and both of them looked very gently or never before used to me. She then opened the books and showed me pages and pages that featured almost identical reading lessons. The design was ever so slightly different from one book to the next, but the content appeared to me to be identical, completely identical. Angela then explained to me that one of those books was the one she had been assigned to use the year before, while the other was the one she had been assigned to use that year. "Do you see what a waste of money this is?" she asked, adding, "There are stacks of perfectly good books like this just sitting in storage rooms [in the New York public schools]. In Trinidad, we had fewer resources, but we really used them. Here, they just keep buying books they hardly use."

Angela's three children, Augustus, Angel, and Arthur,* also shared critical perspectives of New York's public schools, and two of them also discussed the schools from their perspectives as immigrant parents of current young students. The New York public schools did not make a positive impression on Angela's older son, Augustus. Although he never had to attend them himself, because he was already 19 and the equivalent of at least a high school

graduate when he arrived, he learned about them through his mother's experience as a teacher and his brother's experience as a student from grades three through 12. "I hate it," he said,

I dislike the whole [public] education culture here. It makes no sense. It's a day care for kids, that's all it is. Teachers try hard to change that daycare behavior, but the system is totally messed up. It's like a waiting room until college.

Augustus' disapproval of the New York City public schools is so strong that he and his ex-wife have chosen to send their daughter to "a private school, mostly for Caribbean families . . . We don't want her in those public schools," he said.

Augustus was also critical of the heavy stress toll that teaching in the New York public schools has taken on his mother and by extension on his younger siblings.

She was not around for my younger sister and brother when she came here," he said. "I mean mentally. Her main focus was teaching and dealing with the kids in her school. When she came home, she was too tired to deal with anything at home . . . That was time she needed to be with them and let them know she was there. They were at the edge of understanding life. I could not teach them, they would not listen to me. But it was messed up, because her job was so hard, so stressful, all she could think about was work.

Augustus said that it had been different in Trinidad, where her mother worked hard all day, but then was able to come home and relax for much of the time in the evenings and on the weekends.

The New York City public schools did not make a favorable impression on Angela's daughter, Angel, either. She had already graduated from the equivalent of high school in Trinidad, so she did not have to attend them herself before enrolling in culinary school, but she has experience them as the parent of a young son who attended kindergarten and first grade there before she moved with him to a college town in the southeastern part of the United States. "My son was going into the second grade when we moved," Angel said, adding,

We enrolled him in a nice elementary school in a college town. That school was so nice, not like the one in Brownsville [Brooklyn] where he went before. That school was like a cage. The one in [the college town] felt so free. The kids could look out the windows and doors, they could look outside, wherever they were. Each grade had its own playground . . . The one in Brownsville was on the next block from my mom's house, and

it was just caged in . . . I chose to sacrifice my social life in New York, because [the southern college town] was a lot more open for him to be raised [there]. The parents were more open to supporting the kids . . . It was a great school for my son.

After 2 years there, though, Angel moved back in with her mother in the summer of 2013, because she was unsure about her relationship with her boyfriend, about whether it was going to work out. She re-enrolled her son in a New York public school. Angela's characterization of her young son's school as "like a cage" is disturbing, and ought to give pause to anyone concerned with providing equitable educational opportunities to all children.

Angela's younger son, Arthur, attended New York City public schools from grades three through 12. He is thus able to discuss them from a veteran insider's perspective, but also from the Caribbean outsider's perspective of one who was raised and educated in Trinidad for his first 9 years. Despite trying to enroll for his first day of school on September 11, 2001, a day that will live in infamy, and despite constant teasing for his Trinidadian accent and his very thin build, Arthur said that he remembers his years in the New York City public schools as very happy times filled with fun, and friendship, and laughter, and some really great teachers. He said he also enjoyed the way the New York City public schools made him feel exceptionally bright, after being considered at best a mediocre student in his native Trinidad. He found himself eminently well prepared to impress his teachers and classmates in every single subject, dazzling his teachers and classmates alike with his mastery of the multiplication times tables and other basic information that students in Trinidad are actually required to learn. Arthur said he also really appreciated the home schooling opportunity the public schools arranged for him during his last 2 years of high school as an accommodation for the crippling migraine headaches that continued to dog his school attendance through all but the coolest months of the year. He had high praise for his home school teacher, and he credited her with encouraging him and preparing him well for

high school graduation, and for his college entrance exams. As sunny as Arthur's New York City public school memories were, it should be noted that a major reason for his ongoing enjoyment was that he was so much better academically prepared than his New York City native classmates. This in itself is a grave critique of the New York public schools.

Jamaican elementary school teacher Sallie Baker's* criticisms of the New York public schools centered around what she described as the often arbitrary power that principals held over all the teachers, but especially over immigrant teachers with vulnerable visa statuses, and older teachers higher up on the pay scale. She said that this unreasonable level of principal power hampered professional interactions, making it harder for teachers to teach. She said she saw cases, including her own, where principals would criticize a teacher not for any pedagogically valid reason, but just because of a personal dislike, or even because the principal was hoping to find a reason to let go of an older, more experienced teacher so that a less experienced and therefore cheaper teacher could be hired instead. She even characterized her own principal's behavior as "harassment," stating she was surprised to find herself being "written up" for numerous trivialities where it did not seem to her to be warranted. Sallie said she was finally deemed "unsatisfactory" and pushed out of the system after 11 years of service over a trivial incident where she refused to leave her classroom unattended to speak with an angry parent standing at her classroom door. "People just want to write something, to write something critical of an older or more highly paid teacher, but it is not fair. It is not a fair situation," Sallie said. Such a systemic preference mitigating against the most experienced teachers who have given the most years of service, and in favor of the least experienced teachers, does not bode well for the viability of the cultural capital of the public schools.

Martha Menard, the Guyanese music teacher, described her first month teaching in a New York City public school as “horrible,” both for herself as a new teacher and as the parent of sons needing some guidance and advice about the American college applications process. She said that when she first arrived at the school where she was assigned, she had to spend most of the first year teaching outside of her area of expertise, and that when she complained about being assigned to teach special education when she had no special education training, her principal at the time nearly succeeded in having her dismissed for insubordination. Such arbitrary principal power was a concern voiced by all 10 of the teachers, although some of them, including Martha, felt they had eventually developed good relationships with their principals. Putting pressure on teachers to accept any assignment a principal gives, even if it is an irrational assignment, is a practice that calls for closer scrutiny in the best interests of the students.

Bernard Longford,* the Rastafarian math teacher from St. Vincent, is one Caribbean educator who evidently succeeded in using some of his Caribbean educational traditions and values to improve his New York middle school. He reported that he had participated actively in the school reform process at his school, but not before experiencing the same “culture shock” reported by several other interview participants. He said he was “culture shocked” by the general lack of discipline and by the disrespect for teachers and for education that he encountered when he first began teaching in New York City. He contrasted this with the very different treatment teachers could expect in the Caribbean, where he said families taught their children to value education as a path to upward mobility. Bernard described it as “a different value system,” and he said that the biggest difference he saw between Caribbean and American education was “the lack of motivation on the part of the students.” For example, he noted that many of his former students in St. Vincent had gone on to prestigious universities such as the Massachusetts Institute

of Technology, while in New York, “the kids just didn’t seem to care. I was shocked. They did not homework. They came to class unprepared, with not even a pencil. Back home, I never had to deal with anything like that.”

Bernard said he was surprised by the way students abused their textbooks, and dressed inappropriately for school. “I was shocked to see students actually throwing these expensive textbooks around, not using them at all. In St. Vincent, parents had to pay for those textbooks, and students took care of them,” he said. Like many Caribbean educators I spoke with, Bernard noted that school uniforms were the norm in his native St. Vincent, which was very different from the inappropriate and often immodest clothing his New York students were wearing when he first began teaching in his middle school.

The circumstances at Bernard’s school so distressed him for his first 2 years there that he used to come home every night and tell his wife he was going to quit. She encouraged him to persist, though, and then he said he began to adapt and to focus on ways he could help to address the many problems he saw. He said that after a year or so, he began to understand that the “high needs” schools where he and most of the other recruited Caribbean teachers were working were not representative of all U.S. schools, and not typical of most U.S. Schools. In time, he became more active in school reform efforts, and he stayed with his school as it transitioned into the Achievement First model format in 2006. This format included comprehensive support for teacher professional development and school uniforms. In the end, Bernard found a way to use his Caribbean educational values to support the reform and improvement of the New York public school where he was assigned to teach.

Malachi Copperfield,* the aspiring architect who came to New York with his recruited mother in 2001, completed the last 2 years of his secondary education in a New York public

school. Malachi said that his first impression of attending a public school in Brooklyn, New York was that “high school was a breeze. I was average in Trinidad, and I came here, and I developed some bad habits, because I really didn’t have to study here . . . I was put in the advanced classes, what they called the college bound classes. I had it pretty easy, scholastically, in high school here.” He also noted that he was required to complete 2 years of high school that he had not expected to, because he had been at the end of his secondary school studies in his home country. “A friend of mine, the same age as me, had to go back and complete all 4 years of high school, so I guess it could have been worse,” he said, adding that the American grade 11 was “a repetition” for him, but that he did learn some new material in grade 12. Malachi also observed that the college counseling he received at his high school was disappointing, as he was advised that he could not go to college on his J visa, leaving him and his mother to forge his path to college on their own and without any counseling from his high school college counselor.

Jamaican kindergarten teacher Fannie Dickens* and her law graduate daughter Maylie Dickens* also offered important insights gleaned from their insider/outsider experiences with New York public schools. Asked about her first impressions of them, Fannie said, “Oh, my God, my first experience teaching in the United States was horrendous, horrible. Horrible, horrible, horrible. I would go to my bed and wish for Sunday night not to come for another week not to go back to work.” She said this difficult teaching experience taught her a new appreciation for the students she had had back in Jamaica who she said she realized “were not bad kids,” compared to her students in New York who were “really bad kids.” Fannie said,

they were disrespectful. They had no manners. And I was not accustomed to that. I was accustomed to teaching kids who showed respect to teachers, who were mannerly, and this was such a rude awakening for me, the way they talk back to you, the way they acted in class, their behavior. And it's like I had no control. I had no control and it was chaos.

Fannie said that before too long she began to “learn the system.” She said she learned how to “

manage and manipulate like the other teachers, how to get up in their faces. I learned how to talk like them and talk back to them. I learned how to discipline them and not shout at them. Because at first I was constantly shouting, shouting and screaming, and I would come home sometimes and I had no voice. But after a while you know you get into it and you learn the system and you learn that discipline here is not the same as discipline back home in the Caribbean. You learn that a lot of times you have to turn the other cheek. A lot of times you have to just let things slip by, let things go and not pay too much attention to certain things. And so it has been working so far.

Fannie’s daughter Maylie, like Malachi the aspiring architect, attended her last 2 years of secondary school in a New York public high school. She reported that she actually felt relieved when her mother announced that they were coming to America, because it meant that she did not have to take the Jamaican end-of-high-school exams for college placement. She said that compared to her Jamaican Catholic girls’ high school, “high school in Brooklyn was a breeze,” which was exactly the same way Malachi had characterized it. Maylie explained,

All the things they covered, I’d already learned in Jamaica. It was very easy. I was always at the top of the class. I knew it was probably something bad, too, about American high school. I’m like, “It’s kind of sad that you guys didn’t learn this before, you know.” It definitely helped [being educated in Jamaica].

Maylie observed that in addition to the lack of academic rigor, she was also unpleasantly surprised by the rampant disrespect for teachers and students alike. She said that the former was manifested by habitually rude student behaviors towards teachers, even to the point of cursing at teachers when they walk into the classroom. Describing her initial reaction to this widespread behavior, Maylie said,

I nearly fell out of my chair . . . I had not seen anything like that, ever. It was a total culture shock and I mean the teachers have no power here, they can’t do anything. They can’t even tell you to go outside or get out, but that’s just unheard of in Jamaica.

In addition to the rampant disrespect for teachers, Maylie said she was also unpleasantly surprised by the disrespect for students reflected by the number of police officers in and near the schools.

There were always too many cops outside of the school and pinning kids down on the ground, and I thought that was pretty brutal. I did not like that. I did not understand why Brooklyn kids were treated like animals. But then I feel that they kind of acted like animals, so it was confusing. There were always these gang fights outside of the school. After school, my mom told me just hop on the bus and go home. Don't linger, just go home, she said, so that's pretty much all I did. But you know it was a little rough, coming from an all-girls Catholic school where everyone was nice and clean and prissy and then coming to this new environment where they seemed like a bunch of hoodlums.

Maylie said that she has a different impression of American public schools now that she has had the chance to live outside of New York City for a few years.

Now I see that was New York, and nowhere else is really like that . . . But then I've seen that African American kids in particular have a lot of issues, just like the kids in New York. So now I think it's more of an African American issue where the cops are always in those communities, and those schools are always shutting down. I see that the poorer kids end up going to the high schools that are being shut down, and the richer kids get to go to high schools that are better. So I think that is the whole larger issue.

Maylie suggested that more involved parents, smaller, better resourced schools, and “ironically, fewer cops” would go a long way towards alleviating many of the problems that beset the “hard to staff” urban schools where Caribbean teachers were recruited. The insider/outsider perspectives of the five teachers I interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago correspond to many of the views expressed by the five teachers and five adult children of teachers I interviewed in Brooklyn. All of them spoke of the “culture shock” they experienced when first confronted with the violence of New York City’s public schools, and all of them expressed sorrow for the plight of their New York students and dismay at the disrespectful, unprofessional treatment of teachers they found prevalent there.

Kamaria Presley,* the math teacher who returned home to her native Trinidad and Tobago after 7 years, described teaching in the New York City public schools as so stressful that it was driving her blood pressure dangerously high. With decades of professional teaching experience behind her when she first arrived, she said her first impression of New York's public schools was, "Wow! These people are stupid! The books were not suitable, the children were running wild, there was so much needless infrastructure, administration. They were paying lip service to all these facilities and services, but to me it was just madness." She said that over her 7 years of teaching there, she grew tired of dealing with English teachers who did not seem to know proper English, and math teachers who did not seem to know much math. Kamaria also expressed concern about the climate of disrespect she found in the New York public schools. She noted that when she taught in the Caribbean, there was no cursing in the classroom, and she contrasted that to the situation she found in New York, where students and teachers alike cursed at one another as a matter of course. "Rough, crude behavior was the norm from everyone," she said, adding, "There seemed to be a belief that 'You can't be a gentleman in New York City.' I did not like how people degraded the children with this verbal abuse." Kamaria also observed that, unlike any classroom she had taught in in her native Trinidad and Tobago, in the New York City public schools, "The children feel they could hit you, the teacher." Kamaria offered her opinion that the American public schools could not overcome these problems, including the devaluation of teachers, students, and learning, and the normalization of a verbally abusive environment, without confronting capitalism, which she identified as the root of the problem.

It's a capitalist system. That is the problem. The whole system is capitalist. Capitalism ain't going to let it [the current system of educating children in America's public schools] go, 'cause it makes money. People have got to resist capitalism if they want to get serious about fixing the system and really educating the children.

Sting McDonald, the English and Social Studies teacher who returned to Trinidad and Tobago after 8½ years, expressed similar concerns about the normalization of violence that he found upon his entry into the New York City public schools.

It was a rough landing, complete cultural shock. This was supposed to be education! The discipline was not there! I came from such a different environment than this. In my new school, there were fights every day, blood every day. I was trained not to get involved, to just call security, but when the human situation arises, you intervene. Those are your students and you want to protect them. I saw kids stabbed with pencils, girls pulling hair. I saw that when fights broke out, the security guards disappeared, or they just stood there and watched. It was like a prison.

Over time, Sting said he started to adapt to his new violent work environment, but it still seemed strange to him. His first school was Bushwick High School, where he saw daily fights and rampant indiscipline. “We use uniforms in the Caribbean,” he said.

In New York, the kids wore shorts and weird outfits. Their pants were open. It was not like school at all, to me. At Franklin K. Lane High School, my second school, I saw so much blood, and I parted so many fights, holding students on the ground while security just stood there and watched. They just stood and watched.

Sting said that the educational system in New York City was not only violent, but also not accommodating or even effective . . . The kids there are not being given a fair break, and the teachers are being railroaded. The curriculum is too tight, too scripted. But a teacher needs some flexibility to teach . . . I never was allowed that freedom to deal with problems honestly as I saw fit. I have methods and strategies I have developed over the years, and that is the naturalness of the experienced teacher. You see the problem, and you do what needs to be done. But the system limited your naturalness. It was constraining.

Sting also criticized the rigor and depth of the New York public school curriculum. As a high school teacher of history and geography, he found the required lessons he had to teach

ever so light, ever so superficial. The British system is deeper in content. But the American system has more breadth, and many subjects are touched on quickly. I found the students were not able to handle this fast system, because they didn’t master the basics in elementary school . . . They are really shortchanging the kids. He has an idea, but he does not have the skills to express that idea. You have to be able to express yourself in sentences, and most of these kids cannot. It’s not just the kids, though, this is a problem in America. I saw it with the journalists, too, and with people I went to

graduate school with at Brooklyn College. I got there and I said, “What the Hell!?” because those people could not write or argue. The logic was just not happening. Kids and adults too are not going through the logical steps to reach conclusions.

Ruth Baylor,* who taught in New York for only 1 year, also expressed doubts about the logical underpinnings of that system. She said she did not feel the school system there reflected the research driven theoretical framework she had come to expect based on her training and experience in education. She said she found this ironic, because throughout her teacher training in Trinidad, the published findings of American educational research had been constantly referenced; yet in practice in the New York school where she taught, she found that much of that research was simply ignored. “I was not seeing it in operation in the most advanced educational system in the world, in New York, the greatest city in the world,” she said, adding “The system was dysfunctional in so many ways, I don’t even know where to begin. If a teacher saw a mistake in the curriculum, she couldn’t change it. No experimentation was allowed. Just toe the line,” even if it was a wrong line that was not supported by research and that was not working in the classroom.

Ruth said that she quickly understood that she and her Caribbean peers had been brought in first and foremost to “man the schools,” rather than to really teach the children. She said the system did not allow any of the maneuvering that was needed for meaningful instruction to take place. “What we were there for became clear: Keep the system as is, keep the children in check, hold them down for the day, do not transform or instruct. It is a system just to control kids,” she said, adding that the school system was different in Trinidad and Tobago.

It was a cultural shock. At home we have a different respect between students and teachers. It is understood that all of us have come to school to work. In New York, I had to grapple with that every day, to establish that over and over again. All I could do was man it. I saw that I was not getting to them. It was always a challenge and a power play, and it started very early in the grades.

New York City public schools are like “prisons for children,” according to Ruth. She explained that the intense protection of children against teachers and parents has set up a dysfunctional environment that curtails independent thinking and personal self-discipline. As a result, children never learn to show initiative, or to do what is right for intrinsic rewards rather than out of fear of punishment. “Everything is a crime waiting to happen,” she said, adding that in New York City, the schools are not community, but rather just places to go during the day. They are prisons for children, basically, according to Ruth.

Cynthia Jericho* still teaches middle school English in the New York City public schools, although like others, her first impressions of them were not good.

[I]t was so horrible! I never felt so incompetent, so disrespected, in all my life. I’m trying to find the words to describe how awful it was, how awful I felt. I felt disoriented, disillusioned, all the dis words. I felt alone . . . I had said I was a high school teacher, not a middle school teacher, but I was put in a middle school. I asked the principal for a syllabus, and she laughed! She said, “Figure it out!”

Cynthia said that even before going to her new school, she had been “scared shitless” by the way it and all the other “hard to staff” schools had been described to her and the other new recruits at their brief orientation.

We were told, if the kids are not in the right place, don’t touch them. Don’t yell at the kids. [One male teacher recruit] stood up and asked, “Do I need a lawyer to teach here?” So I was already intimidated before I went to my new school. I went into my new classroom, and I said to those children, “Could you please sit down?” as gently as I could, and they just ran roughshod over me. The kids said, “Miss, do your work.”

Cynthia explained that her students evidently understood something about the system that she did not, and the necessary cultural adaptation was confusing and painful for her.

With 2 years of miserable experience behind her, Cynthia said she began having different kinds of conversations with herself about her work:

I said to myself, “in this system, you can do everything right, and be very nice, but the kids always win. I must adjust.” What I had done before did not work, so I had to do

something different. I took a different stance. I started to be bitchy. I stopped saying please. I even started cursing. I had to subvert the very nice Ms. Jericho. Still, somehow, the kids saw through it, and they still said, “We love you, Ms. Jericho.” I had to become bitchified to deal with these children, and they understood that.

Once Cynthia achieved this new level of classroom competence, she said the unspoken rules became clear to her:

Do not call for help. Do not send a note to the dean. Do not send a note to the AP [assistant principal], or to the other teachers. Close your door, and get your shit together. Once I understood all of this, I was more in control.

She said she still wanted to come home, but in the meantime she was promoted to lead teacher, and now other teachers come to her to ask for advice about classroom management and curriculum design. She completed her second master’s degree, this one in adult education, because she said she wanted to learn more ways to help other teachers “cope with this mess.” For the past few years, she has been working towards a Ph.D. in learning styles at St. John’s University in Queens.

Gloria Prescott,* the Christian minister from Tobago, only taught in New York for 2 years, but she found it was long enough to learn a lot about New York’s public schools from the inside. Assigned to an elementary school in the Bronx, Gloria said, “It was a real culture shock. I was not prepared for the vitriol of the students.” She decided to go home in 2003, though, because her father got sick and she wanted to be there for him. “I had no problems teaching in New York,” Gloria said. “Some Caribbean teachers were sent home, but not me.”

Gloria said she originally went home with the intention of returning after a year or two, and her principal had agreed to that. However, by the time she was ready to return in 2004, there was a new principal at the school with different ideas. “The new principal was Hispanic, and she didn’t want any more black teachers,” Gloria said. “She said there were already too many black people at the school.”

Gloria said she quickly found herself in disagreement with the way the New York public school system evaluated students, however, and with the way they were taught. She also noted that the reading and math skills of the students there were very low; but after she saw how they were taught, she said she began to understand why. “I was going crazy in that system,” she said,

You can’t teach one day. The system is upsetting the children. They start fractions one day, and the next day, it’s something different. It’s easy to see why children are failing math and sciences in America. In Trinidad and Tobago, when we teach a new subject, we plan it, we practice it, we do it in different ways over time. We teach it not just to pass an exam, but to build life skills. The way they do it in New York cannot work, and the teachers there cannot teach.

This concludes my examples of the outsider/insider perspectives of these Caribbean teachers recruited to teach in New York City’s public schools. I suggest that educational policy makers would do well to pay special attention to what they have to say about American public education, because I believe their observations could be used to address and alleviate many of the most distressing problems we are now facing. For example, when all of the Caribbean youths who arrive in New York public high schools describe their course load as “a breeze” and the overall environment as “like a prison,” we could learn something from that. When a veteran outsider/insider teacher says the workload is impossibly heavy, maybe the workload needs to change. Maybe some work that the teachers consider busy work could be eliminated. Or, if all of the assigned work is deemed essential, maybe additional teachers need to be hired to get it done properly. When a veteran math teacher from another system insists that our math teachers don’t know enough math and that our system is failing to help our students achieve adequate math mastery—Observations that are supported by the way by PISA scores and similar international metrics—maybe it would be beneficial to ask that teacher to suggest better ways to teach math. When a black male teacher with decades of classroom experience laments that the violence in the New York City schools is out of control, I suggest we should sit up and take notice. When he

further asserts that we are utterly failing to teach logical thinking skills, I suggest we should ask him to tell us more about how he thinks we should do this. When another veteran teacher says the NYC schools are “prisons for children,” we should be alarmed and we could benefit by listening more closely to what she has to say about the value of hugging little children. When a soft hearted teacher with many years of successful experience says she had to become ‘bitchified’ to function in the NYC public schools, we should not condemn her, but rather confront the system that drove her to this extremity. In other words, we should take a critical look at those aspects of the public school system that only allow harsh disciplinarians to survive in the classroom. When a Christian minister who is also a teacher and who has devoted her whole life to caring for children says, “The system is upsetting the children,” we need to hear that, and we need to hear more of her suggestions for better meeting the needs of all of our children in the New York City public schools and in all of the public schools across America.

The insider/outsider perspectives of these Caribbean teachers in New York City point to deep systemic injustices that must be addressed in fairness to the children of that city, and to public school students across the country, as the same problems that plague New York’s schools also trouble other American schools, especially urban public ones. This proves my original thesis that international teacher recruitment, and in particular the U.S. public school recruitment of highly trained teachers from “developing” countries, has become an illusory panacea for alleged teacher shortages, a short-term strategy for staffing classrooms instead of a longer-term and much more difficult and costly set of strategies for really prioritizing education as a necessary core value of a just and sustainable knowledge economy. Using ethnography to inform policy, these testimonies address specific effective ways to improve American public education, starting with real respect for education, and for teachers. They also reveal the extraordinary flexibility of

the Caribbean teachers' labor, as they found ways to adapt to and make sense of an often violent and senseless public school work environment.

Finding #3: Traditional gender roles were important to these teachers and their families, and influenced their recruitment, immigration, and other major decisions. My readings of Caribbean sociology and Caribbean feminism (Barriteau, 2003; Barrow & Reddock, 2001; Bose & Kim, 2009; Downes, 2003; Downes, 2004; Leo-Rynne, 1999; Lewis, 2003; Marshall, 1972; Miller, 2004; Mohammed, 2004; Reddock, 1994; Reddock, 2009; Scher, 2010; Thomas-Hope, 2009) gave me a lens through which to view the discussions of gender roles that often arose spontaneously in my discussions with these 10 Caribbean teachers and five of their adult children. These testimonies suggest distinctly gendered patterns in the recruitment of international teachers and their families, emphasizing the family identities of immigrant laborers, human connections and obligations which should be acknowledged by teacher recruitment and immigration policies. In my discussions of gender, I reference Barriteau's (1994) definition of it:

I define gender to mean complex systems of personal and social relations through which women and men are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to, or are allocated, status, power and material references within society" (as cited in Barriteau, 2003, p. 27)

In particular, Caribbean sociologists and feminist scholars helped me to better recognize well established patterns of Caribbean masculinity and matrifocal family structures (Barrow, 2001; Hodge, 2002; Wilson, 2001). As my Caribbean scholarly readings helped me to understand, these 10 Caribbean teachers and five of their adult children often discussed their lives, their family's recruitment, their immigration experiences, and their hopes for the future in distinctly gendered terms that dovetailed with scholarly descriptions of traditional Caribbean roles for men and women. Their reports of their subjective experiences also illuminated some of the ways their

traditional gender and family constructions translated from their Caribbean to their American contexts. Angela Nestle and her two sons and daughter, all of whom I interviewed for this project, presented many examples of this. Importantly, Angela and all three of her children attributed her primary motivation for accepting the 2001 New York City recruitment offer not to her desire to fulfill her wishes for herself but rather to her desire to provide the best possible educational and medical opportunities for all three of her children. All four family members noted that Angela was most highly motivated to immigrate because of her desire for her youngest son, Arthur, age 9 at the time, to gain access to the best possible medical attention for his crippling migraine headaches. Despite the many difficulties the family has faced over the years because of their immigration from Trinidad and Tobago, including the ongoing lack of legal residency status for two of her children and the years living in poverty in a crowded one-bedroom apartment in a crime-ridden food desert in Brooklyn, Angela averred that it was all worth it for her, because all three of her children have taken advantage of higher educational opportunities in New York, and especially because her youngest child's healthcare has improved with access to more medical specialists. "For me, my son Arthur got excellent medical support here that we could not get at home in Trinidad," she said. Angela's self-sacrifice for her children echoed Barrow's discussion of "matrifocality," emphasizing that it "refers to mother-centeredness, not to female dominance or headship" (2001, p. 423). Angela made this major life decision to leave her native country where she was personally and professionally well established and comfortable not because of her own desires, but because of her motherhood, and the obligations she accepted as concomitant with her role as a mother. She put her mother role at the center of her decision, but she did not do so in a domineering way, rather asking her children

for their views and clarifying their preferences and expectations before finally committing to move with them.

Angela's relationship with her children continued to evolve in the traditional Caribbean matrifocal way described by Barrow, as she has now become "the center of an economic and decision-making coalition with her [adult] children" (Smith as cited in Barrow, 2001, p. 423). This is visible in her real estate holdings in both Brooklyn and Port of Spain. In Brooklyn, her three children reside with her, sometimes intermittently, but always able to call their brownstone three-flat home, and always working and earning with her to meet the mortgage and manage the property for their mutual benefit. In Port of Spain, Angela and her eldest son Augustus have been working together to improve the three-bedroom house she owns there, deciding in consultation with one another on such matters as who will live there and when the roof will be replaced. While visiting with Angela in Port of Spain, I also witnessed her wiring him a sum of money, a small loan in support of one of his independent business enterprises.

The views Angela expressed towards marriage were reflected by the scholarship of Hodge, particularly when Angela shared that she had decided reluctantly to marry the father of her three children, although she said she cared for him and respected him a great deal. "I was just never sure about marriage," she said, adding, "In Trinidad, a lot of women are skeptical of marriage." Her words were nearly identical to the words of Hodge, who wrote that Afro-Caribbean women "have always been a little skeptical about the benefits of legal marriage . . . despite centuries of pressure from various religious agencies" (2002, p. 475). Despite her own skepticism, Angela did marry the father of her children in a Roman Catholic ceremony; and they divorced a few years after she and the children moved to New York. Religion is inarguably important to Angela, a regular churchgoer who prays daily and strives to live her Christian faith.

Nevertheless, she maintains this independence of mind, having her first child out of wedlock and eventually divorcing the father of her children, two actions defiant of the Roman Catholic Church in which she raised all three of her children.

Angela's eldest son, Augustus, also spoke skeptically of the institution of marriage, which he had entered into and then departed from twice by the age of 30. Describing his first marriage to a woman in his native Trinidad, he said,

The marriage broke up our relationship . . . Marriage is like a funeral to me, or like a procedure. I felt I was really forced . . . We are cool now. We are best of friends. We talk online, we laugh . . . I guess we have those memories together.

Augustus's dark view of marriage coincides with his mother, Angela's expressed skepticism of the institution, and with Hodge's discussion of it (2002, p. 475). This may partially explain his decision to keep his second marriage a secret from his mother for several years, until his wife became pregnant with their daughter. He said he and his second wife remained in their parents' homes during the first years of their marriage, allowing others to believe they were in a dating relationship rather than a marriage.

Augustus spoke with great pride of his daughter, who was 6 at the time when we spoke. This would reinforce Wilson's explanation that fatherhood is proof of masculinity in Caribbean countries, even the ultimate proof of manhood (2001, p. 340); but I find this characterization applies equally to all the men I have ever met anywhere in the world. I suspect that men of all nations take pride in fatherhood, not just Caribbean men. Wilson also discussed the special importance placed upon the relationship between a Caribbean male and his mother (2001, p. 340), and such a relationship was apparent between Augustus and his mother. (This was also apparent in the relationship between Angela and her younger son, Arthur; but I will address that later). Another interesting way Augustus' views appear to mirror his mother's is in his stated

desire to put his daughter's best interests ahead of his own. Although he said he dreams of moving back to his native country, he chooses to stay in New York so that he can "be there for her when she needs [him]."

Augustus also expressed a desire to "be there" for his mother and his siblings throughout their immigration process and throughout their lives: "I always from day one and to this day, I always think about family first, I always try to make sure that everybody is okay no matter what," he said, describing his desire and his decision to take care of his mother and his siblings at many critical junctures, and to provide steady support for them.

Augustus spoke of tensions in his parents' marriage, blaming himself for their refusal to speak to one another for the last three or four years that they lived together in Trinidad before Angela's recruitment. He said the main reason for this impasse was their disagreement over how to handle Augustus' insistence on acting like a man, like his d.j. father, including earning a man's wage and staying out late at parties. He said that he understands his parents' perspectives better now that he is a fully grown man and a parent himself:

Now I see more how I'm like my father. But then it didn't add up for me, what he really was coming from and how he felt as a person. Because now I see he did the same for his family. He sacrificed his schooling to go work, and he sent all his sisters to the United States, bought the tickets and they came to the United States. He didn't have no junior sec. My dad left primary school to go work to help his sisters to go to school.

This choice to make personal sacrifices in order to support siblings, a choice both Augustus and his father made, reflects Hodge's (2002) descriptions of "actual family systems" obtaining in the Caribbean today, which reveal that most Caribbean children are actually raised by more than one person, in fact by several family members" (p. 475). It confirms Hodge's definition of the Caribbean family as "a network of people, not just two parents and their children" (Hodge, 2002, p. 475). It also connects with Miller's (1994) discussion of male marginality (Miller as cited in

Downes, 2003, p. 315), in the sense that both Augustus and his father who chose to remain in Trinidad wound up in some ways marginalized by Angela's economically empowering decision to immigrate to New York. Augustus was marginalized because he sacrificed much of what he had already built up careerwise in his native country. His father was marginalized because he was literally physically separated from his children and from his wife, who subsequently divorced him.

Caribbean understandings of marriage, gender roles, family structure and maternal obligation also emerged from the project participation of Angela's daughter and Augustus' sister, Angel. Just 16 at the time of her mother's recruitment to teach in New York City, in the intervening 12 years Angel had a son, earned her credentials as a pastry chef, fell out of legal residency status, moved in with a Trinidadian boyfriend in another state, and then just at the time I interviewed her moved back in with her mother in their Brooklyn home. Like her mother and her brother, and as anticipated by the scholar Hodge (2002, p. 475), Angel expressed skepticism about the benefits of legal marriage. The special importance placed upon the relationship between a Caribbean male and his mother is apparent in Angel's relationship with her own son, whose happiness and education she cites as the main reasons she has chosen not to return home to her native country. She said she believes she could more easily build her own career as a pastry chef with citizenship status there, rather than as an illegal alien in the United States. She chooses to stay, though, putting her son's interests ahead of her own: "It would be unfair to my son to move back to Trinidad now," she said. "He's doing well in school. Now I need to educate him, that is the first priority." As Barrow explained, this form of matrilocality is not dominant, but rather mother-centered, placing the interests of the child first (2001, p. 423).

Angel's discussion of her mother, Angela's decision making processes also reflected this form of matrifocality. She described the way her mother did not tell them but asked them if they wanted her to accept the recruitment offer: "We talked it over as a family, and we wanted to come for many reasons," she said, noting that her brother, Arthur's health, and educational opportunities for her and both of her brothers, were the main reasons the four of them agreed to go. Angel also said that now that she is older, she can see that although her mother was at the center of this family decision, she did not do it mainly to please herself: "Now that I am more grown up, I see that this was more for us than for my mom," Angel said. "This was not her dream. She had built a good life for herself in Trinidad, but she saw opportunities for us, she wanted that for us."

Arthur, Angela's younger son, was only 9 years old at the time of her 2001 recruitment. Asked about his earliest school memory, he responded, "Every part of my story always starts off with a girl," and he mentioned many girls who admired him and brightened his life since kindergarten until the present. He also recounted the way his then-16-year-old sister Angel cared for him when they first arrived in Brooklyn, New York, actually taking him to his first day of school there on that fateful September 11th morning, and often caring for him while their mother worked long hours at her school. This is typical of Hodge's Caribbean family, where "a network of people, not just two parents" care for the children (2002, p. 475). Arthur also spoke of the special, close relationship he enjoys with his mother, "those three o'clock in the morning discussions" where they discuss religion and the meaning of life, and where she often ends by telling him to "go read King Solomon." These conversations, as well as the work Arthur and his mother share in trying to advance the immigration rights of Caribbean teachers and their adult children, both reflect both the special Caribbean mother/son relationship described by Wilson

(2001, p. 340) and the matrifocal “decision-making coalition” noted by Barrow (Smith as cited in Barrow, 2001, p. 423).

Martha Menard, however, presents another case. Immigrating from Guyana to teach in New York in 2001, she brought along her three young sons and they all moved into the home of her brother, where Martha remained through the time that she participated in this project. The situation of her brother providing housing for her and her sons is a further reflection of Hodge’s definition of a traditional Caribbean family (2001, p. 475). Martha had definite views about the structure of the Caribbean families who responded to the 2001 recruitment:

[W]hen we come, most of us have come from families. A lot of Caribbean people are single parents or they come with husbands, wives, children, some even brought nieces and nephews that they brought up from young, and who they had to now adopt officially so that they could bring them with them officially. Because in the Caribbean your family is not mommy/daddy/children, your family is biological as well as environmental if you want to put it that way. Everybody raises a child. Everybody is interested in a child. If you come from a village, or even in a city, once people know you are a teacher: “Boy, your father is a teacher! Or your mother is a teacher!” And before you arrive home, the litany of what your woes have been for the day have been told to your parent already, have preceded you. So the whole thing was right there and you had to be circumscribed from early on.

Martha, like Cynthia, Angela, and Fannie, who also brought their children with them, said that the main reason she came to New York was to provide better opportunities for her three sons:

The reason I came, besides teaching, is I figured that if my sons could go to America they would get a chance of learning new things and seeing different ways. There were so many opportunities, I thought, for them to grow and develop. Because the world is changing and several things you can do. And so we came.

All of these mothers, and also Angela’s daughter Angel who is also a mother, spoke of putting their children’s best interests ahead of their own in deciding whether to live in New York or in the Caribbean.

Jamaican kindergarten teacher Fannie Dickens and her recent law graduate daughter Maylie Dickens also talked about the way the teacher parents prioritized their children's educational possibilities over their own personal preferences in deciding to accept the New York recruitment offer. In addition, their testimony also corresponds with the ideas of matrifocality and traditional Caribbean family structure presented by several other interviewed teachers and this project's literature review of Caribbean scholarship. Fannie stated unequivocally that educational opportunities for her children were her main motivation: According to Fannie, the best thing about her move to New York was the kind of tertiary education she and her husband have been able to provide for their children. "Education in Jamaica is very expensive," she said. "At that time, I said, 'For my kids, for their college and for their betterment, I am going to America.' I said, 'If I get through [the visa process, etc.], I'm going.'" This may be understood as a mother-centered (Smith as cited in Barrow, 2001, p. 423) in that Fannie was not dominating her children by her decision, but was rather prioritizing their best interests over her own.

Fannie's testimony and that of her daughter Maylie dovetailed with Hodge's description of Caribbean women's work (2001, p. 474) and Caribbean family structures. I learned from speaking with Maylie that for as long as she could remember while growing up in Jamaica, her mother had not only worked as a teacher throughout the school year, but also worked as a nannie in New York throughout her summer vacations. Fannie did not mention this to me herself at first, but then she did verify it after I asked her about it, saying, "The Friday we were out of school I would be on the plane to New York, and the weekend before school was starting again, I would return the Sunday just before the first day of school," she said, adding that that additional income enabled her to buy appliances and better clothes for her family. She said her husband also worked multiple jobs, teaching at three different schools at one point.

Maylie told the same story about her parents' hard work and multiple jobs. The scholar Hodge wrote, "There was never a time in Caribbean society when women did not go out to work" (2002, p. 474), and Maylie said she does not ever remember a time when her mother was not going to work, not even in the summertime. Even in her earliest school memory, Maylie recalled that her mother was not there for her first day of what in Jamaica was called infant school, which was like kindergarten in the United States.

I believe my mom was probably away. She had a pattern where she would come to the United States and work over summers as a nanny or a babysitter with a family here [in the United States]. That was pretty much how she brought in extra income, coming over here. So she was a frequent traveler. She came here to the United States every summer and worked.

Maylie said that she feels very grateful to her parents for providing so well for her and her siblings. She said,

I feel blessed to have had both parents there supporting us. My brother and sister and I, we've never been in positions where we had to choose food or go to school. We've always had beds to sleep on. My parents work very hard, like I said, my mom summers after working for the whole year as a teacher during the summers she was here making money. Then she would bring items back to sell to make more money. My mom is like a modern day hustler. And then my dad, he has about three jobs right now. He has the 9 to 5 at the school, then after school he's an after school teacher, up 'til around 8, he gets home at 9 or 10 p.m. And then on the weekends he teaches Saturday school. He's a modern day hustler, too. My mom, now she just does the 9 to 5, because she's tired. My sister just had a son, so I have a nephew. She's full time grandma, too, now.

Maylie's sister and baby nephew live at home with her parents, as is customary in many Caribbean families.

Discussions of traditional Caribbean gender roles also arose in my discussions with the five additional teachers I met with and interviewed in their homeland of Trinidad and Tobago. Math teacher Kamaria Presley's description of Caribbean families, for example, coincided with Hodge's definition of a Caribbean family as "a network of people, not just two parents and their children" (2002, p 465). Kamaria said,

We rely on extended families in the Caribbean. The nuclear family is not such a focus. We have matriarchal families where all the children are cared for by many people. We don't have much foster care, because it is not needed, except for extreme cases. Usually there are enough adult relatives to care for a child.

Like Hodge, Kamaria also questioned the usefulness or relevance of the phrase “single-parent” (Hodge, 2002, p. 475) in the Caribbean context. Contrary to the pathologizing of such family structures by English social-welfare workers in the 1940s (Barrow, 2001, p. 419), Kamaria noted that this more supportive and community oriented way of raising children had produced superior results for her own children and for many if not most of the students she had worked with over her many years as a teacher.

Sting McDonald, the English and social studies teacher who left New York City after eight and a half years, noted the matrifocality of his own family, describing the way his older sister who was a teacher dominated his early education, even hitting him with his Latin book and holding him back in elementary school one extra year. “Our family was matrilineal, our culture is that way, and my sisters were very much in charge,” he said. Sting was one of 10 children in his family, five boys and five girls. The birth order was four girls, him, four more boys, and then one more girl.

It was definitely matrilineal. My older sisters controlled the whole show. They were all brilliant, and they all did well in school and at university. We were categorized this way: The McDonald girls were brilliant, but the boys were “not as.” But my brothers and I did well, too. One became a physicist, and one was associated with Eric Williams [the first prime minister of the country]. That one complained he knew more than our sisters. I used to correct my sister’s teaching, and she got mad when I did that. You had to listen to the teacher, not question her.

In addition to his description of the matrilineal family of his childhood, Sting also described his family situation in his later life as typically Caribbean in the sense that he regularly spends a great deal of his time with his extended family, helping his relatives of all ages as needed. This

included significant amounts of time helping to raise his nieces and nephews, a traditional and highly valued role for Caribbean uncles (Barrow, 2001; Hodge, 2002).

Ruth Baylor, who only taught in New York City's public schools for 1 year, discussed what she perceived as connection between the Caribbean traditional family and the more nurturing style of teaching in her native Trinidad and Tobago. She encouraged me to return to Trinidad and Tobago during the regular school year, so that I could observe firsthand how different education is there, compared to New York City. She said that if I did that, I would sometimes see teachers hugging children and vice versa. "In New York City, no human touch is allowed, but some of those children really need to be hugged." She added that many of her former students in Trinidad and Tobago are now her lifelong friends, a situation she says is unlikely to occur in the American system. She said this is because in New York City, the schools are not community, but rather just places to go during the day. She repeatedly characterized them as basically "prisons for children." The more nurturing Caribbean school environment Ruth described coincides with Hodge's definition of Caribbean family as a network of people (2002, p. 475).

Cynthia Jericho is a current New York City middle school English teacher who discussed difficulties raising her children after their move from Trinidad to New York. It seemed there were many reasons for this, but chief among them may have been her family's loss of the extended support of family and friends they had enjoyed in their home country, including many family friendships with Caribbean artists and poets, and the presence of their father. She talked about her sense of foreboding before and after she and her two children made the move, with her husband encouraging and even pushing her all the way, despite his own decision to stay in their native country the whole time. This left her to manage in New York as a "single-parent," an alien

concept in the Caribbean context. But a single-parent is what she actually was, so tired and stressed at the end of her violent workdays that she actually forbade her children to speak to her for the first half hour after she arrived home from work each day. This meant that her “kids were left on their own to absorb all the negatives,” without the additional adults that probably would have been nearby to help them in Trinidad, including her godmother the famous poet, and their father and other relatives.

“In the meantime, while I was doing all of this, my bright, beautiful children, my kids, fell off the track,” Cynthia said, weeping. “They got lost,” Sandra said sadly. “My son, at his first public school, came home so upset one day, asking me, ‘What’s a dime?’ I didn’t know, and he didn’t know.” She said, “we figured it out later, but there were so many little things like that, and the other kids were hard,” explaining that looming over all of these constant cultural adaptations was the unending question of whether or not the family would be moving back soon; “the damage had been done.” The change from the Caribbean extended family household to the American single-parent household was evidently hard on Cynthia and her children, undermining their abilities to access their culturally adapted gender roles.

Limitations

Like any ethnography, this work could never be complete. I only spoke with a few teachers and their children out of the hundreds who were recruited, and these few I only spent a little time with, only a few hours or a few days or weeks spread over less than 5 months of formal data collection. There remains much more to be said, many more Caribbean teachers and their children who could continue to enrich my narrative of their recruitment to teach in New York City. Nevertheless, I found there came to be across these few partial biographies I have

collected many commonalities, and some evidence that I had reached a kind of saturation, or in other words sufficient data from which to draw inferences and conclusions.

In addition to a limited number of participants (15, 10 in New York and five in Trinidad and Tobago), this sample included more women than men (eight female teachers and two male teachers), and more Trinbagonian than other Anglophone Caribbean teachers (six of the former and four of the latter). A limitation on the number of participants was imposed by the research time frame of five months in which to find and then arrange to spend time with the participants, but also by the nature of intensive interviewing, which demands more time be spent with individual participants, thus dictating a smaller participant pool. The inclusion of more women than men was the result of at least two practical considerations. First, I felt more comfortable approaching women and for all intents and purposes inviting myself into their homes, whereas I would only approach a male participant with a clear introduction, and I would not normally invite myself into a man's home. Second, more women than men teachers appeared to be active in agitating for their visa rights in the newspaper articles I found during the early stages of my research. Since these were subsequently among the first people I contacted, I wound up with more women than men teachers. In addition and closely related to this reason, more women than men were recruited to teach in New York, according to the newspaper reports and activist documents I found, and also according to my own limited observations and the reports of the teachers I interviewed. Finally, the larger number of Trinbagonians among my participants was highly likely given that I actually visited Trinidad and Tobago to find and interview additional New York recruited teachers, after interviewing a variety of teachers in New York. In New York, two interviewed teachers were Trinbagonian, two were Jamaican, one was Guyanese and one was from St. Vincent. Unsurprisingly, in Trinidad and Tobago all five of the teachers I

interviewed were from that country, four from the isle of Trinidad and one from the isle of Tobago.

The particularity of the group of 15 people I interviewed—10 women and five men, 10 teachers and five adult children, 10 natives of Trinidad and Tobago and five from other Caribbean countries—suggests some limitations on the generalizability of their observations. For example, while these interviews yielded consistent concern that immigrant teachers need broader support in order to transition successfully into their roles as new American public school teachers, and repeated criticisms of American public education as both undisciplined and uncaring, it would not be valid to conclude that all or even most Caribbean teachers would be likely to concur with these critical views. A much larger number of New York’s Caribbean teachers would need to be interviewed or at least surveyed to know how widespread such views might be.

The testimonies of these 10 Caribbean teachers and five of their adult children—10 women and five men—reinscribe the matrifocal family structure (Barrow, 2001) and traditional definition of the family as a network far greater than two parents (Hodge, 2001) that many Caribbean scholars have identified and discussed. Some instances of male marginalization (Miller, 1994; Downes, 2003) and the special importance of the relationship between a Caribbean male and his mother (Wilson, 2001) also emerged. Considering these gendered experiences within the transnational experience of the 2001 recruitment of Caribbean teachers for New York City’s public schools show that mothers play key roles in their families transnational decision making. As the Caribbean anthropologist Go wrote, “Women are the protagonists in the drama of globalizing Caribbean kinship, which requires the active maintenance of circuits of exchange of goods, services, communication, travel and personnel”

(2005). Some of the human costs of this transnational, transgenerational migration were also apparent, as when participants reported relationship strains related to the move north.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research into the stated and unstated rationales for U.S. public school districts to recruit international teachers would be worthwhile. It could help to make the distinction between what problems school districts are claiming to try to address by such recruitment and which problems are actually addressed. It would also be interesting to investigate which problems are perceived to be created by these processes, as reported by students, families, teachers themselves and other school stakeholders. Such research could enrich the understanding of the international recruitment process in the United States and other contexts, revealing more about this growing global mobilization of teachers.

It would also be worthwhile to build upon the project begun in this dissertation, interviewing more of New York City's Caribbean teachers and their families, as well as other teachers and families from other countries now teaching in various public schools across the United States. Beck's 2010 dissertation on Barbadian teachers in Kentucky, and Dunn's 2011 dissertation on Indian teachers in the southeastern United States have contributed significantly to this body of knowledge, as has this dissertation. I recommend that more scholars attend to the voices of teachers globalized in the service of the knowledge economy, building the body of cases interrogating this key development.

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Appendix A

Table of Participants

Name*	Country	Age	T or AC?**	Subject	Residence	Visa	Citizen	Gender
<u>Brooklyn interviews:</u>								
Angela	Trinidad	c. 60	Teacher	Spec. Ed.	NYC	Green	Trinidad	Female
Augustus	Trinidad		31 AC	NA	NYC	NA	US citizen	Male
Angel	Trinidad		28 AC	NA	NYC	No	Trinidad	Female
Arthur	Trinidad		23 AC	NA	NYC	No	Trinidad	Male
Sallie	Jamaica		62 Teacher	Elem.	NYC	No	Jamaica	Female
Martha	Guyana	c. 60	Teacher	Music	NYC	Green	Guyana	Female
Bernard	St.Vincent	c. 50	Teacher	Math	NYC	Green	St.Vincent	Male
Malachi	Trinidad		25 AC	NA	NYC	No	Trinidad	Male
Fannie	Jamaica		58 Teacher	Elem.	NYC	Green	Jamaica	Female
Maylie	Jamaica		28 AC	NA	NYC	Green	Jamaica	Female
<u>Port of Spain interviews:</u>								
Kamaria	Trinidad	c. 65	Teacher	Math	Trinidad	NA	Trinidad	Female
Gloria	Trinidad		62 Teacher	Elem.	Tobago	NA	Trinidad	Female
Sting	Trinidad	c. 65	Teacher	Soc. Studs	Trinidad	NA	Trinidad	Male
Ruth	Trinidad	c. 60	Teacher	Elem.	Trinidad	NA	Trinidad	Female
Cynthia	Trinidad		54 Teacher	English	NYC	Green	Trinidad	Female

Angela, who appears above, participated in interviews in both Brooklyn and Port of Spain.

Explanatory notes:

*Pseudonyms were used, as participants were either illegal aliens, or related to illegal aliens.

Country is the country of birth reported by the participant.

Age is the age given by the participant, or the approximate age, as the participant preferred.

**T or AC indicates whether the participant was a recruited teacher, or the adult child of one.

Subject is the academic subject the teacher reported teaching in NYC; or NA for adult children.

Residence is where the participant reported living at the time of the interviews.

Visa notes the reported visa or green card status of the participant.

Citizen notes if the participant was currently a U.S. citizen at the time of the interviews.

Trinidad is short for Trinidad and Tobago.

St.Vincent is short for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Guyana is short for Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Under Subject, Spec. Ed means special education, Elem means elementary, and Soc Studs means social

Under Visa, Green is short for Green Card holder, in other words a Permanent Resident of the U.S.

Under Visa, No means the participant is out of status or illegal.

Appendix B

IRB Approval

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
Institutional Review Board
528 East Green Street
Suite 203
Champaign, IL 61820



March 7, 2013

Pradeep Dhillon
Ed Organization and Leadership
377 Education Bldg
1310 S Sixth St
M/C 708

RE: *Globalizing Teacher Labor for the Knowledge Economy: The Case of New York City's Caribbean Teachers*
IRB Protocol Number: 12891

Dear Dr. Dhillon:

Thank you very much for forwarding the modifications to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Institutional Review Board (IRB) office for your project entitled *Globalizing Teacher Labor for the Knowledge Economy: The Case of New York City's Caribbean Teachers*. Since you have addressed the stipulations as requested, the IRB will officially note for the record that these major modifications to the original project, as noted in your correspondence received February 15, 2013: changing from anonymous surveys and confidential interviews to allowing an identifiability option for all research activities and all participants; and dropping the waiver of documentation for the surveys, have been approved. The expiration date for this IRB protocol, UIUC number 12891, is 11/29/2013. The risk designation applied to your project is *no more than minimal risk*.

As your modifications involved changes to consent form(s), I am attaching the revised form(s) with date-stamp approval. Please note that copies of date-stamped consent forms must be used in obtaining informed consent. If modification of the consent form(s) is needed, please submit the revised consent form(s) for IRB review and approval. Upon approval, a date-stamped copy will be returned to you for your use.

Please note that additional modifications to your project need to be submitted to the IRB for review and approval before the modifications are initiated. To submit modifications to your protocol, please complete the IRB Research Amendment Form (see <http://irb.illinois.edu/?q=forms-and-instructions/research-amendments.html>). Unless modifications are made to this project, no further submittals are required to the IRB.

We appreciate your conscientious adherence to the requirements of human subjects research. If you have any questions about the IRB process, or if you need assistance at any time, please feel free to contact me or the IRB Office, or visit our Web site at <http://www.irb.illinois.edu>.

Sincerely,

Anita Balgopal, Director, Institutional Review Board

Attachment(s)

c: Margaret Fitzpatrick
Cameron McCarthy
Teresa Barnes

telephone (217) 333-2670 • fax (217) 333-0405 • email IRB@illinois.edu

**SIGNED CONSENT LETTER
FOR INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS**

Title of Project: Globalizing Teacher Labor for the Knowledge Economy: The Case of New York City's Caribbean Teachers

Responsible Principal Investigator: Dr. Pradeep Dhillon, dhillon@illinois.edu,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Other Investigator(s): Margaret Fitzpatrick, fitzpa11@illinois.edu, or
fitzperfectly@hotmail.com, phone (217) 344-2350, PhD student at the University of
Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in the College of Education.

1. **Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to learn more about the experiences and perspectives of New York City public school teachers recruited from the Caribbean in the last decade or so.
2. **Procedures to be followed:** Participants will participate in one or more structured interviews and surveys in person or online via Skype. These interviews and surveys will be digitally audio recorded, and your consent for this will be requested just below. Identities of interview participants will be kept confidential if they so prefer.
3. **Discomforts and Risks:** No special risks or discomforts are anticipated beyond those of normal life. Because some persons associated with New York City's Caribbean teachers, in particular their adult children, may be out of legal visa status, the identities of interview participants will be held in confidence for any participant who so requests.
4. **Benefits:** It is hoped that this research will help to call greater general and scholarly attention to some of the particular concerns of New York City's Caribbean teachers.
5. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Personal information will remain confidential when requested, in which case only Margaret Fitzpatrick and Pradeep Dhillon, the interviewer and the Responsible Principal Investigator, will have access to identifying information. This data will be kept in a digital file in a password protected datacloud. When this research is published or disseminated, no personally identifiable information will be shared.
6. **Whom to contact:** Please contact Dr. Pradeep Dhillon with any questions, or concerns about the research. You may also call Dr. Dhillon if you feel you have been injured or harmed by this research. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study or any concerns or complaints, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (collect calls will be accepted if you identify yourself as a research participant) or via email at irb@illinois.edu.
7. **Compensation:** No compensation is offered in exchange for your participation.

8. **Cost of participating:** No special costs to you are anticipated by the researchers.
9. **Voluntariness:** Participation is voluntary and you may discontinue at anytime without any penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled. Remember that you can skip questions you prefer not to answer.
10. **Dissemination:** This research will be used by Margaret Fitzpatrick in the preparation of her doctoral dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a PhD degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She may also use results of this research in papers for publication and presentations for presentation in various scholarly venues. She may also write a book about this research.
11. **SIGNED CONSENT** - Please indicate your consent by checking yes or no in response to the following statements, and then printing and signing your name, writing the date after the statements just after that. [In the online version, you must also hit the submit button at this point.]:

"I have read and understand the consent form and voluntarily agree to participate in this study." _____ YES _____ NO

"I give permission for my name to be used in connection with my interview or survey responses." _____ YES _____ NO

"I prefer confidentiality and the use of a pseudonym." _____ YES _____ NO

"I give permission for my interviews to be audio recorded." _____ YES _____ NO

"I am 18 years of age or older." _____ YES _____ NO

"I understand I will be given a copy of this consent form for my records." _____ YES _____ NO

Please print your name: _____

Your signature: _____

Today's date: _____

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
APPROVED CONSENT
VALID UNTIL

NOV 29 2013